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Dungeons & Dragons

CITIES OF THE FORGOTTEN REALMS BY ED GREENWOOD

dragon®

ISSUE 334 · AUGUST 2005

TERROR FROM THE DEEP

ECOLOGY OF THE KRAKEN

6 Serious Spells for Seafarers

"Am I getting drunk yet?" Booze in D&D

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0 71486 01823 0

Dragon

VOL. XXX NUMBER 3

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Dragon® (USPS 318-790) is published monthly by Paizo Publishing, LLC, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201 Bellevue, WA 98005-4200, United States of America. (ISSN# 1062-2101) Periodicals Postage Paid at Bellevue, WA, and at additional mailing offices.

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POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO
Paizo Publishing, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200.

BACK ISSUES: paizo.com/dragon or call (425) 289-0060.

SUBSCRIPTIONS/CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Contact Paizo Publishing at **subscriptions@paizo.com** or call (425) 289-0060. Although we accept subscriptions to prison addresses, delivery is subject to the discretion and/or whim of prison personnel. If you have not received a magazine or premium, please consult with your mail room authorities. This publisher is not responsible for non-delivery.

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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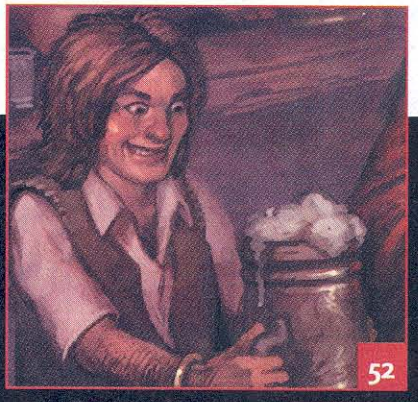

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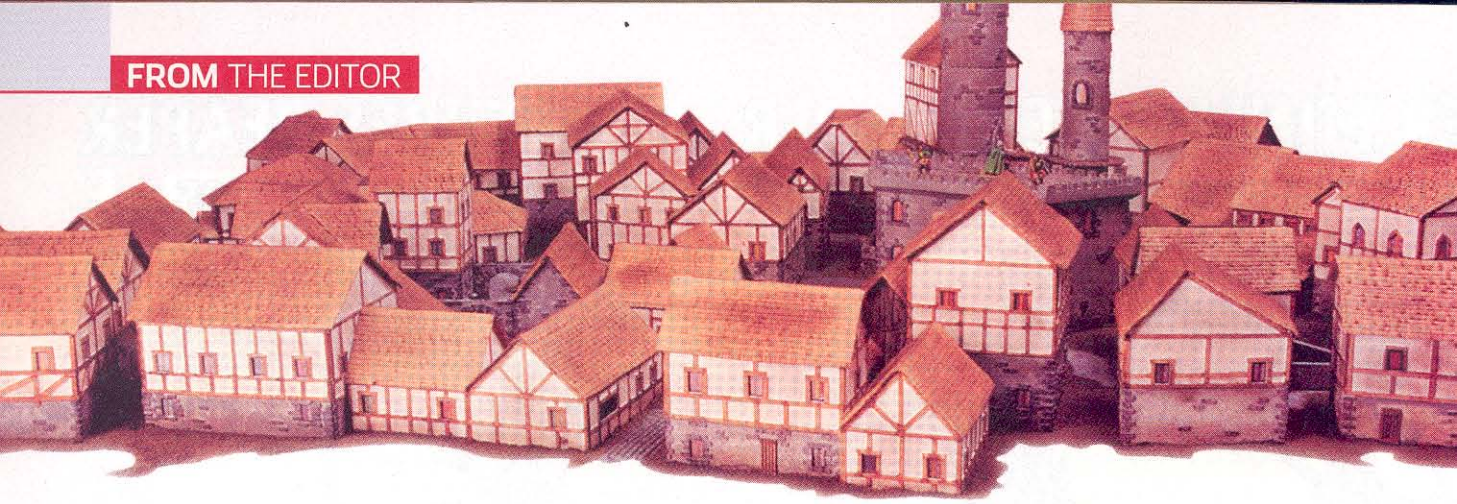


LIVING IN THE CITY

Last weekend, I had a great idea while staring down a pile of proofs for this issue of DRAGON. Instead of sitting in my muggy apartment and trying to edit the magazine within eyeshot of my Xbox, I decided to throw the pile of articles in my bag and head out to a local coffee shop. I left the suburban cocoon of Renton, Washington (home of Wizards of the Coast) almost a year ago for the city of Seattle, eager for the changes an urban environment could provide. I wanted to live within walking distance of great bars and cozy cafes where I could pull up a booth and edit or write shrouded by the white noise of a living city. But until last week, I'd never really had a chance to do it.

As I sat and fiddled with this issue's text over the course of several hours, hundreds of customers lined up at the coffee bar. Families with children, heavily pierced punks covered with more tattoo ink than clothes, businessmen in suits and ties, and little old ladies paraded in front of me, each with distinct features and each with their own story to tell. The human parade reminded me of how far I'd come since leaving the clannish, isolated suburbs and how much the diversity of city life had to offer not only my personal life, but also to my D&D games.

There's no question about it. I prefer running D&D in a city environment for many of the same reasons I like *living* in a city environment. Of all the campaigns I've ever run, my favorite by far was set exclusively in a city, and "what happened" each session was pretty much up to the players. With the variety a city had to offer, it felt like the whole world was open to us each time we played.

In that spirit, DRAGON presents the first in Ed Greenwood's ongoing "Cities of the Realms" series. It's not quite fair to call this a column, as it won't appear every month, but you can expect several major cities over the course of this year and well into next. The idea behind "Cities of the Realms" is to provide both players and Dungeon Masters with enough information to make an interesting locale come alive in the campaign or as part of a PC's background. Please stop by our message boards at **paizo.com** and let us know what you think of the article and specifically what you think of the article format.

THE SHACKLED CITY ADVENTURE PATH HARDCOVER

As I write this, we're about a week away from sending *DUNGEON Classics: The Shackled City Adventure Path* to the printer, and our enthusiasm for the product just keeps growing and growing. The 416-page hardcover official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS release (MSRP $59.95) collects 11 adventures from DUNGEON, with new bridging material, new art, and a new chapter by Christopher Perkins. Cartographer Christopher West's incredible talents fill a 24-page full-color map booklet and a huge double-sided poster of the city of Cauldron just perfect for the walls of your favorite gaming room. Look for the book at your local game store or online at **paizo.com**.

THE DRAGON COMPENDIUM (VOLUME I)

DUNGEON isn't the only magazine to get the hardcover treatment. In October, Paizo will release *The DRAGON Compendium* (Volume 1), a 256-page collection of some of the greatest articles ever published in this magazine, updated to the latest edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules (MSRP $39.95). A true collection of the best DRAGON articles would fill several volumes, which is precisely why we're calling this one "Volume 1." Developed by fan-favorite designer (and new Wizards of the Coast employee) Mike Mearls, the book features a return of the orange, purple, and yellow dragons, classes like the death master, sha'ir, and savant, and as much great content from the past as we can fit between the covers.

Erik Mona
Editor-in-Chief

LETTERS

Tell us what you think of this issue. Send an email to **scalemail@paizo.com**. Please include your name, city, and state.

Mike's Relatives Chime In

Hi to all on the *Dragon* staff. I'm just some no-name teenager in a no-name town somewhere in Western Washington. Recently, the D&D craze hit my area (probably a second or third wave of it, actually) and I'm happy to say, it's my doing. I am universally (well, in the school district) known as the best Dungeon Master around. Ever since my cousin taught me to play, I've loved the game (by the way, my cousin who taught me is your very own Mike McArtor) and I have the desire to follow in his footsteps. So I wonder, what steps do I have to take to get my feet wet in the Gen Con establishment, or even with your own *Dragon* magazine? Ok, I have a thought. I love inventing monsters, but most DMs simply cannot do it. So I think it would be cool if *Dragon* (actually this probably befits *Dungeon* more) had a monster of the month section where, unlike ecology, they invented a new monster instead of detailing old ones.

Brad McArtor
Buckely, WA

While we don't have any plans to do Ecology articles for new monsters, we're absolutely committed to printing exciting new creatures on a regular basis. This month's "Dreams of Arabia" is just the latest in a long line of nasty critters making their debut in these pages. As for getting your feet wet with the Gen Con establishment, might I suggest concocting some sort of familial relationship with one of the Dragon editors?

Apology Accepted

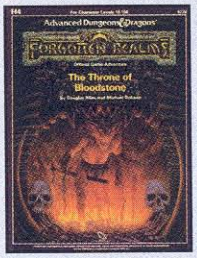
I want to apologize. For four previous years at Gen Con, I let your sales pitches and subscription deals go through one ear and out the other while stopping by your booth. However, it wasn't until I received a free copy of the magazine and actually read it that I got hooked. I wanted to subscribe immediately, but decided to wait until Gen Con So Cal to do so. Unfortunately, you guys did not have a booth there. So I subscribed when I got home. It has been the best $80 I've spent on Dungeons & Dragons in quite a bit. I admit what hooked me was the *Final Fantasy* chocoboo ["Silicon Sorcery," *Dragon* #323]. Just six months earlier I had begun a campaign based on *Final Fantasy*. The articles in *Dragon* are well written and informative. If I knew any better I'd think you guys had journalism backgrounds as your feature writing is better than some of the writers I've worked with at major newspapers.

A month or two ago I read that you guys have PDFs of some of your back issues. My dying question is, when will

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

What's is the command word to make this skeleton attack?

BLAST FROM THE PAST: H4: THRONE OF BLOODSTONE



"We don't really believe that anyone has ever 'earned' a 100th-level character, in the sense that the character was started at level 1 and worked his or her way up in a normal (non-Monty Haul) campaign."

So declare Douglas Niles and Michael Dobson the designers of 1988's Forgotten Realms adventure, *H4: The Throne of Bloodstone*. Shoehorned into Faerûn in support of the then-new campaign setting, H4 concluded the Bloodstone series of modules with the highest-level adventure ever published. Designed for 18th- to 100th-level characters, *H4: The Throne of Bloodstone* took characters from the Citadel of the Witch-King (complete with a Sauronlike everseeing eye) to the infinite layers of the Abyss. There they had the chance to encounter Demogorgon (and every other demon lord) on their way to steal the *Wand of Orcus*.

Despite the module's plentitude of bad puns, an inappropriately "humorous" voice, and seemingly random design choices (including an entire "city" populated by 100 nameless liches—one of whom bore the *Hand of Vecna*), H4 did provide a party with ingenious challenges (some of which, unfortunately, could be overcome with mid-level spells), high-level combat, the opportunity to rule a small kingdom, and the chance to steal the *Wand of Orcus* from the demon prince himself!

Let us know what you think of H4 and its designers' claim with an email to **scalemail@paizo.com**.

you guys offer a subscription package that offers the magazine hardcopy and a PDF of it? I'd be willing to pay an extra $3 to $5 per magazine if I got an attached CD (or for that matter an emailed PDF) of the magazine to accompany it. I know other magazines have started doing it and, since I have seen it for the last four or five years, it appears to be successful. You can even charge advertisers to include demos of their upcoming PDFs and such on it. It seems to be a double win for you guys.

I have read a number of letters in which people talk about cutting out, copying and filing your articles. In PDF or digital format this would be so much easier. Also, this will allow me to reference your magazine in game through my laptop instead of treading through my DM binder.

Nathan Collins
Via Email

We're not quite ready to jump on the electronic subscription bandwagon just yet, but each month we're hearing more and more requests for us to do just that. We're keeping an eye on the available technology and our own capabilities, and if anything changes on this front, you guys will be the first to know.

Apology Demanded

It was bad enough that you found it necessary to print the letter of the classless orc who was so surprised to find some good-looking "Chick Gamers," but to print it and then not print a response (and I know for a fact from my gaming group, you got at least one!) is unacceptable. This is part of the reason there are so few women playing D&D: Male Gamers! Or at least their behavior toward women. One, they're not "chicks." Two, given the lack of personal grooming, style, and class that I see all too often at the local game shop (mental note for the future—being able to belch the entire theme from Star Wars might be funny to your friend, but most women won't think so) I say that most male gamers have no room to judge.

If you are serious about attracting more female gamers, here are a few suggestions: 1. Alter your marketing! Women are not interested in gaming in a world where all women are either chainmail-clad Victoria's Secret models, Pamela Anderson clones, or swooning, fainting Disney princesses. Why do male fighters wear full plate armor and a helm and women get a G-string and metal pasties? 2. Learn some manners. The staring, whispering, and strutting around that begins when a woman enters a game store is classless. Grow up. 3. And finally, talk to women about the game! Don't waste their time talking about your character and how great and awesome he is, how he slays dragons with a thought or that he looks like Brad Pitt—only better. All of the women that I play with, including my wife, are interested in one thing: good story! They aren't interested in stats and modifiers, they are interested in solid roleplaying and deep character development. I have run games with-

FLAYED ALIVE

Dragon Talk

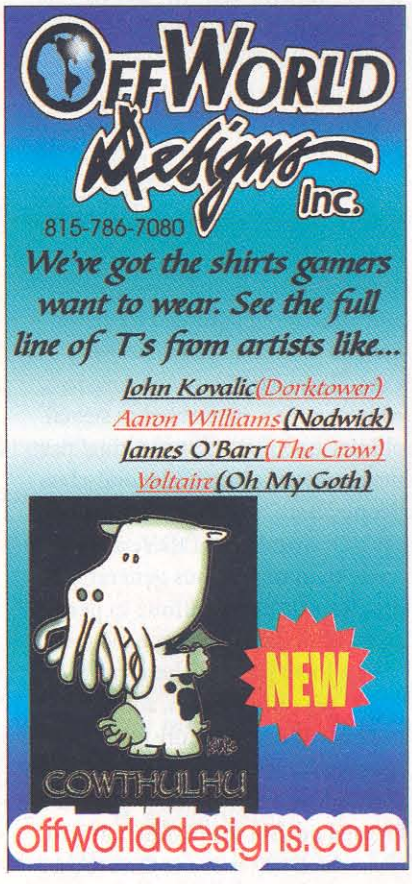
Although by now he's probably little more than a gibbering husk, *Dragon* would like to congratulate Matthew Sanders of Chester, Connecticut on winning Genki Gang's one-of-a-kind tentacled horror headwear. For those who didn't get to participate in the Mind Flair contest, the answers to the questions posed in *Dragon* #330 follow:

1. How many Class Acts are in issue #330 of *Dragon*? Eleven for the standard classes plus April's special commoner Class Act make a total of *twelve.*

2. Which animal hat does **genkigang.com** claim makes you a better *Street Fighter* player? Scientists have determined that Genki Gang's *tiger hat* makes you a master *Street Fighter* player.

3. According to *Lords of Madness,* what is an aboleth's favorite food? Although foods found on land are preferable—and humans and gnomes are among such favorites—*svirfneblin* are particular delicacies.

Thanks to everyone who e-mailed answers and watch these pages for future chances to win more prizes, gamer gear, and horrors beyond imagining.



out a single battle that had my players sitting on the edge of their seats. If your game is lacking, or is just plain hack and slash, it won't cut it.

Richard Caetano
Modesto, California

As far as belching Star Wars themes goes, are we including the new trilogy? I only ask because it's not really fair to expect people to have memorized how to burp those themes yet, since the movies are still so new. On the subject of "chick" gamers, I didn't personally respond because I wanted to generate a storm of letters on the subject from the readership. Like, for instance, this one:

All About the Ladies

In *Dragon* #333, Erik Mona asks why the scales are so out of balance in favor of the boys, and what can be done to bring more ladies into the fold. After all, he says, he's all about the ladies.

I got the joke. I thought it was quite clever, as the soda-stains on the front of my shirt can attest. Indeed, the whole comedic style of "wry parody" appeals to a geek like me tremendously, those dry jabs at brutish "jock" behavior. It's also delightfully self-deprecating, a clever meta-commentary that suggests real depths of self-awareness, even while the substance of what was said clearly is not meant to be taken seriously.

But in real life, the misogynistic attitudes being parodied by an off-handed comment like that really do exist. We live daily in a culture in which women are treated as sexual objects, unequal conversational partners, non-experts, and second-class people. Both men and women are much more aware of these attitudes today than in previous generations, but the attitudes continue to persist, and will do so for a long time yet.

To a lot of gamers, these kinds of "facts" are unimportant, and appear to detract from the more concrete concerns (the low numbers of women playing D&D) that gamers "should" be focused on. But the distinction isn't clear-cut. D&D, more so than most "games" and like many long-term hobbies, is an inherently *social* activity. The pleasure any individual participant gets from playing D&D is directly proportional to how that individual is treated by the group. When a person is treated without respect, their opinions overlooked or ignored, their contributions regularly mocked or critiqued, and their identity constantly demeaned, it is unlikely that they'll see much point to this "D&D" business.

These are all complaints I have heard from female gamers over the years. What is interesting is that I have also heard the *exact same complaints* from some male gamers as well, suggesting that the group pressures that lead to people getting "turned off" by D&D manifest in similar ways. I have been gaming for nearly two decades now, and during that time I have seen many gamers, male and female, hounded out of a group that either consciously or unconsciously did not choose to include them in the activity. In several instances players had nothing but the best of intentions, but those intentions still did not translate into respect of some important aspects of a person's identity—their lifestyle, ethnicity, religious beliefs... or gender.

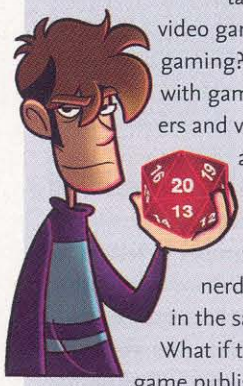
All the best intentions in the world cannot make up for a subtext of intolerance. It's become easier nowadays to understand what "tolerance" means for lifestyle, ethnicity, and religion. Our culture makes clear what sorts of comments, humor, and banter is "acceptable" and what is not. In the

KNOWLEDGE CHECK ANSWER

Sokurah the Magician commands the skeleton, "Kill! Kill him!" That's also helpful when you use this guy in D&D minis.

PAX GAMERAMA

Dragon Talk



Wouldn't it be great if a game convention gave equal love to tabletop gaming, video gaming, and PC gaming? If it had panels with game industry leaders and visionaries? How about adding gamer movies in a 1,100 seat-theater—and six nerdcore concerts in the same venue? What if the world's best game publishers came too, showing off their latest wares and even unreleased games? Sound like fun? Gabe and Tycho of gamer webcomic Penny Arcade (**penny-arcade.com**) agree, and last year they did something about it.

The premier Penny Arcade Expo (PAX) drew more than 4,500 people from all over the world to Seattle for two days of tournaments, free-play, exhibitors, industry panels, and concerts. The show's highlight was the world public playable premier of *Halo* 2. This year's PAX is even bigger. "Essentially Tycho and I decided to throw a big-ass, three-day party for gamers and everyone's invited," says Mike "Gabe" Krahulik, Penny-Arcade artist. Nintendo, Ubisoft, NCSoft, Privateer Press, and the *Dragon* staff are among the announced participants. The music portion of PAX has been extended to two full nights of the best in nerdcore including Optimus Rhyme, MC Frontalot, The Minibosses, and Cthulhu rock band Darkest of the Hillside Thickets. Last year's multi-genre Omegathon elimination tournament is also back with a prize suitably more impressive than the previous $25,000 package. PAX goes down August 26–28 in Seattle, WA; see **pennyarcadeexpo.com** for details. *–M.F.*

case of gender it's rather murkier. We are bombarded daily by cultural messages that tell us it's all right to joke about being a ladykiller, or to tease someone for being "too feminine" and reading *Cosmopolitan* (Letters, DUNGEON #124). In most cases, I doubt that the person making such comments even thinks about what is implied about the relative worth of being female. [*Or perhaps the person making such comments simply thinks* Cosmo *is a crap magazine.*—ed.]

Since it's very easy to feel angry and defensive when one is the target of critique, let me point out that I don't think there's a problem with humor or parody, particularly when it's obviously over-the-top. Nevertheless, I am certainly sympathetic to people who might feel otherwise, particularly someone (say, a woman) who knows what it is like to be bombarded by cultural imagery on a daily basis. So, for example, if I was to ask (in good faith) why only a little over 5% of DRAGON readers are female, and it was pointed out to me that perhaps female gamers are feeling excluded and substandard because the men in my gaming group ignore them, don't respect the contributions they make, and on top of that have a tendency to make comments and jokes they consider sexist, I wouldn't hesitate to address *all three* concerns. It's a more a matter of simple politeness (particularly on the first two points) that some esoteric bit of feminist theory.

In short, I think a lot of male gamers could do with a bit of self-reflection, and see whether they're treating a female gamer the same way as a male—or whether they're often ignoring them, going the extra mile to criticize what they say and do, and/or cracking wise about having "bagged the wench of a barmaid" at the village tavern last night.

To use an analogy, if I'm serving lamb chops at a dinner party, and I learn that one my guests is a vegetarian, I would find something else to serve them, regardless of whether I agreed with their ethical reasons for not eating meat. What I would *not* do is sit around wondering why more vegetarians didn't show up to my lamb chop dinner parties.

Ken Lacy
Via Email

PRAISE FROM LIVERPOOL

I just wanted to let you guys know that I think you are doing a great job on the magazine, which is always full of useful articles that you don't get anywhere else. I'm a big fan of reading DUNGEONS & DRAGONS material rather than actual game playing, and it's wonderful to have the magazine as an extra resource. But I do have one complaint! You never have fan mail from anywhere other than the USA or Canada, yet DRAGON has a big following in the UK. Please don't forget about us Brits, because there are many devoted fans over here and it can be quite difficult to get new D&D stuff in England.

Anyway, congrats on the good work and keep it up!

Joanne
Liverpool, England

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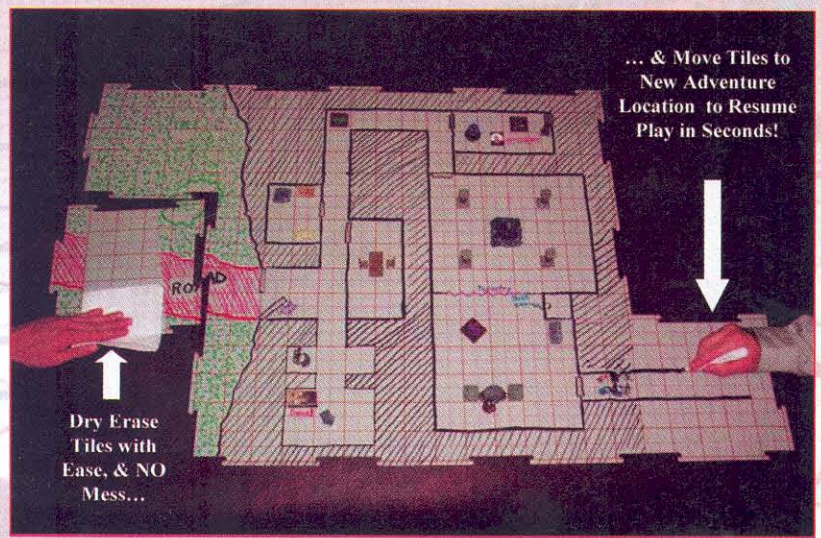

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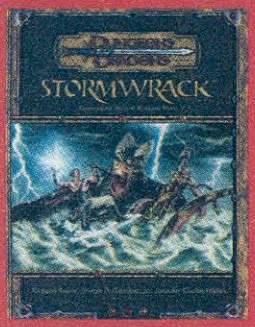
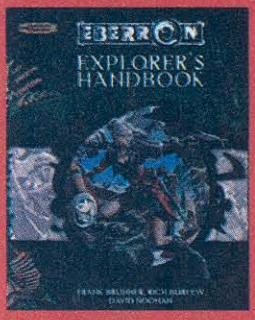
PREVIEWS, NOTES, AND NEWS FOR GAMERS

NEW RELEASES



Like a full-force gale, *Stormwrack* takes you from pirate attacks to ship battles and from subterranean waterways to fearsome storms. Specific spells and magic items help characters explore the depths like never before and enable aquatic creatures to range over dry land. A new narrative combat style allows DMs to handle ship-to-ship boarding actions without becoming bogged down with details. Other goodies include ship diagrams, new siege engines, special DM encounter tables for aquatic settings, new locations, and four ready-to-run adventures. Designed by Richard Baker (who put his Navy background to full use), Jennifer Clarke-Wilkes, and Joseph Carriker Jr., *Stormwrack* is the third book in Wizards of the Coast's environment series. *–S.B.*



Take a world tour of EBERRON with the *Explorer's Handbook*. Offering a look at EBERRON's vast continents, some for the first time, the *Explorer's Handbook* presents locations to explore, new character options, and tools for adventurers to take on their journeys. Numerous ways to travel are also detailed, from airships and lightning rails to stagecoaches and caravans. A newly updated world map also provides a whole new look at EBERRON. Designed by David Noonan, Rich Burlew, and Frank Brunner, the *Explorer's Handbook* allows you to explore EBERRON as never before. *–S.B.*

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT

"Hurling slaves at the wall isn't working. We need to hurl heavier slaves... covered in spikes."

Welcome to *Berserker Halflings from the Dungeon of Dragons*, the 6th standalone card game in Z-Man Games' B-Movie series. In it, players compete to make the best (or worst) movie possible by deploying characters, props, and locations while killing off opponents' characters. Fully compatible with *Grave Robbers from Outer Space* and the rest of Z-Man's B-Movie line, *Berserker Halflings* both quotes and spoofs famous fantasy films from *The Lord of the Rings* to *The Beastmaster*.

Also new from Z-Man this summer is *Dungeonville*, a 2 to 5 player card game illustrated by John Kovalic. Assume the role of evil wizards competing to see whose dungeon is the toughest by hiring adventurers from town to run your gauntlet—first one to seven kills wins! Find out more about both *Berserker Halflings* and *Dungeonville* at **zmangames.com**. *–J.S.*

NEXT MONTH IN DRAGON

DRAGON #335

New Olamn Bard College

by Elaine Cunningham

Waterdeep's new bard college takes center stage with an in-depth look at its members, supporters, and more. Learn the secrets of Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun's organization, the Moonstars, who seek to protect the people of Faerûn from hidden dangers. Gain contacts within the knowledgeable academy to find out what adventure awaits at the end of every tune.

Interview with Ed Greenwood

by Jeffrey E. Thetford

Master of the FORGOTTEN REALMS, Ed Greenwood, talks about the writing business, his home campaign, and the city of Waterdeep. Finally, Ed answers the eternal question, "Are you Elminster?"

Game of Chance

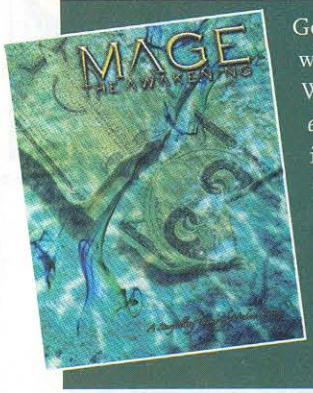
by Elaine Cunningham

Elaith Craulnober returns! The sinister moon elf discovers a means to make use of the dormant *moonblade* in his possession, but does he dare violate the traditions he holds so dear?

Plus!

The Ecology of the Lizardfolk, Bard Spells of Waterdeep, and of course, Class Acts, Bazaar of the Bizarre, First Watch, Novel Approach, Scale Mail, Sage Advice, Wormfood, and comics.

WAKE UP, NEOPHYTE



Get ready to stare into the abyss and learn the truth of what lies in the depths of your own heart. This month White Wolf adds the hefty 320-page *Mage: The Awakening* game to their World of Darkness lineup. Cross into one of the Supernal Realms and choose your path—Theurgist, Warlock, Necromancer, Enchanter, or Shaman—and learn that reality isn't quite so real. Then seek guidance and instruction from one of the five modern mystic orders and learn to peer into the shadows to uncover the truth. Your search begins at **worldofdarkness.com.** *–M.L.F.*

THIS TOMB WILL BE YOUR GRAVE!

Hecatomb. Webster's dictionary defines it as "...the sacrifice or slaughter of any large number of victims." New from Wizards of the Coast, this decidedly dark card game pits players against each other as Endbringers trying to end the world. The game features five-sided cards, each with four clear edges and one edge detailing game mechanic info. By summoning and stacking successive creatures, players spawn grotesque abominations with amalgamated powers from up to five composite beasts. Hecatomb booster packs and starter decks debut this month with everything you need to bring about your own unique apocalypse. *–M.F.*

ARE YOU READY FOR A WAR?

Fantasy Flight Games, creators of the popular *Lord of the Rings* and *A Game of Thrones* board games, have announced an exciting addition to their lineup: the *World of Warcraft* Board Game, coming this fall. The popular *World of Warcraft* online roleplaying game took the *Warcraft* setting to all new heights and Fantasy Flight Games hopes to do the same with the *World of Warcraft* Board Game, which will be suitably epic in size and design, featuring over 200 figures based on more than 25 separate sculpts.

Can't wait that long for your *World of Warcraft* fix? This summer, Sword & Sorcery Studios presents the *World of Warcraft RPG*. As the name suggests, this is no mere follow-up to the *Warcraft* RPG, but a whole new monster providing everything you need, from orcs to night elves, now in one OGL book.

For more information, visit **fantasyflightgames.com, warcraftrpg.com,** and **worldofwarcraft.com.** *–M.L.F.*

COMPLEAT TOOLKIT

GAMEMASTERY
COMPLEAT ENCOUNTER

"It's a perfect mini-adventure or sidetrek to drop into your game," says Compleat Encounters author Mike Mearls. "Minis, battlemat, an adventure with stats, and intriguing NPCs—it's a gaming toolkit."

New from Paizo Publishing's GameMastery line, Compleat Encounters unite the skills of some of the most popular and talented celebrities in the RPG industry. Each package comes with three unique miniatures designed by fan-favorite artist Wayne Reynolds, two full-color double-sided map tiles from Christopher West, and an evening-long D&D 3.5 adventure by Mike Mearls that ties everything together. *Dark Elf Sanctum*, the premiere set due out this month, revolves around the machinations of a dark elf priestess, her summoning portal, and a terrifying new demon, each depicted with its own miniature. The forthcoming *Death Shrine of the Ninja Cult* and *Vault of the Whispering Tyrant* release in September and October, respectively.

From dark elves to ninjas, lich lords to monkey kings, each Compleat Encounter set is available at **paizo.com**. Also, watch that site for more from Paizo's ever-expanding GameMastery line. *–J.S.*

THE GAMERS 2: DORKNESS RISING

After gaining a cult following with 1999's comedy film *The Gamers*, Dead Gentlemen Productions is back with a feature-length sequel. *The Gamers: Dorkness Rising* chronicles the woes of an adventuring party as they attempt to stop the evil Cult of Death. Can the DM convince his group to quit killing off NPCs? Will Gary remember that he's playing a woman? And its most daunting challenge yet—the female gamer!

Cameos include such gaming celebrities as Monte Cook, Sean Reynolds, Ed Stark, and even Aaron Williams' Nodwick. Magnificent Egos has also modeled a line of miniatures based on key characters from the movie. By far the most impressive, however, is the stamp of approval from Wizards of the Coast that confirms all the rules in *Dorkness Rising* as 100% D&D 3.5 compatible.

While the film's release date remains undecided, a rough cut will be shown at Gen Con Indy this month. *–J.S*

THE DEVIL IN MENZOBERRANZAN

Devil's Due Publishing is currently releasing brand new comic adaptations of two of D&D's most popular fantasy offerings.

R. A. Salvatore's FORGOTTEN REALMS: *Homeland* vividly comes to life in a three-issue limited series revealing the early adventures of the scimitar-wielding drow Drizzt Do'Urden and his fight to escape Menzoberranzan. *Dragonlance: Chronicles #1* revisits Krynn, following Tanis, Raistlin, Tasslehoff and all the rest in an eight-issue limited series. For more information, visit **devilsdue.net/dnd**. *–M.L.F.*

GEN CON INDY 2005

Once again the Indiana Convention Center plays host to the largest and most prestigious gaming convention in North America: Gen Con Indy. This year's celebrity guests include, among others, Alan Tudyk and Summer Glau of *Firefly* and *Serenity* fame, Ernie Hudson (Winston from *Ghostbusters*), and Lynn Abbey, co-creator of Thieves World. This year's Gen Con Indy also hosts the first Gamer Olympics, where gamers try to overcome their same trials and traps as their characters, from the "Chase of Doom" to the "Passage of Death." The RPGA's yearly D&D Open Championship also promises to test your dungeon delving skill with the sequel to last year's *Shards of Eberron*, penned by DRAGON's own Jason Bulmahn. For more information on Gen Con Indy, event registration, and more show highlights check out **gencon.com.**

DUNGEON THIS MONTH

DUNGEON #125

The Three Faces of Evil

by Mike Mearls

Clues discovered in Diamond Lake lead to the Dark Cathedral, a forlorn chamber hidden below a local mine. There the PCs battle the machinations of the Ebon Triad, a cult dedicated to three vile gods. What does the Ebon Triad know about the Age of Worms, and why are they so desperate to get it started? An Age of Worms Adventure Path scenario for 3rd-level characters.

Pit of the Fire Lord

by Andy Collins and James Wyatt

A madman hidden deep under Sharn plans to tear open a portal to the Sea of Fire. Can a band of heroes reach him in time to save the city from a fiery doom? "Pit of the Fire Lord" is part three of the three-part "Shards of Eberron" Campaign Arc, which debuted at Gen Con Indy 2004 as the official D&D Open tournament. An EBERRON adventure for 6th-level characters.

Seekers of the Silver Forge

by Tim Hitchcock

Strange things have long plagued fishermen's nets—but none so strange as a gilled githyanki's severed head. Do these briny omens lend credence to rumors of a sunken githyanki city caught in a necromantic civil war? Find out in "Seekers of the Silver Forge," a D&D adventure for 15th-level characters.

KING OF THE HILL

After a half-century of making fantastic strategy games, Avalon Hill is still going strong. With new favorites like *Betrayal at House on the Hill* and *Sword and Skull*, they're sure to be around fifty more years.

This August, Avalon Hill announces an exciting new interpretation of the famous *Axis & Allies* board game with the new *Axis & Allies Miniatures* line. A whole new take on this classic, *Axis & Allies Miniatures* allow you to choose and customize your own World War II-era army and either recreate historical battles or wage new wars of your own. Each starter box includes twelve pre-painted plastic miniatures, full-color stat cards, four double-sided color battle mats, and all the rules and dice you need to do battle.

Speaking of titanic clashes, get ready to rumble with the revamped and revitalized *Monsters Menace America*. Take on a dual role as both a military division trying to protect humanity and a B-movie monster battling to become King of All Monsters.

Also, don't miss the exciting rerelease of Richard Garfield's *RoboRally!* Players pit defective droids against one another in a destructive demolition derby across an ever-changing factory floor. Only one robot will be crowned the victor—for the rest lies a future at the bottom of the scrap heap.

Finally, Avalon Hill's newly released *Nexus Ops* strategy game pits the armies of futuristic mega corporations against each other as they fight for control of a resource-rich moon. Your troops—from basic human grunts to monstrosities of genetic manipulation—compete on secret missions to assure your dominance of this untamed world.

For more on these and future releases from Avalon Hill, visit **avalonhill.com**. *–M.F.*

RPGA UPDATE

by Ian Richards
RPGA Program Manager

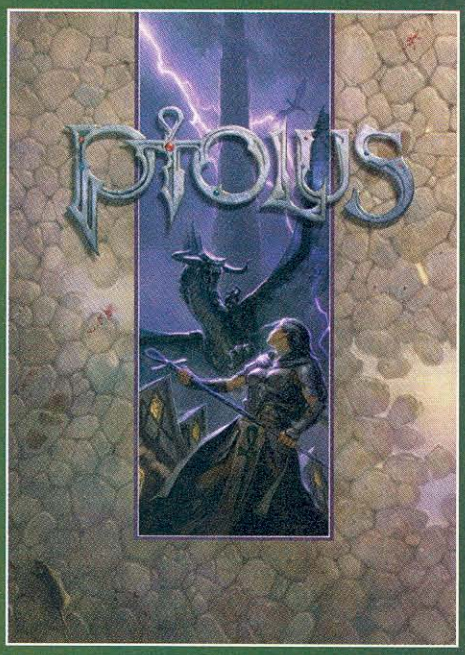
In a recent council session here at RPGA central we deliberated and cogitated over the rewards we give to our hard working GMs. After an exhaustive and often heated session in locked council halls, we've finally decided the current D&D Rewards aren't enough. GMs shouldn't miss out on getting Campaign Cards (vouchers providing in-game uses for your character) just because they are GMing and not playing. Also, offering complete sets at sixty points doesn't reward GMs at lower point totals. Therefore we're tinkering with the GM rewards program to give GMs Campaign Cards at every reward level! Yes that's right, every level, just like players' rewards. This means that GMs receive three Campaign Cards for every twenty GM points they earn and not just a complete set for hitting the sixty-point level. More cards equals more treasure and more reason to GM than ever before!

In addition, we thought long and hard about the status of offering *Dungeons & Dragons Miniatures* booster packs within the rewards system and finally agreed to remove them altogether rather than having them available only for the top tiers. We will continue to produce special alternative paint minis and they will still be available at every twenty-point break.

Other news sees J.D. Wiker joining the editorial team of the RPGA. J.D. will be familiar to a lot of players as he has worked on numerous roleplaying lines for Wizards of the Coast, including *d20 Modern*, *Star Wars*, and D&D. We wish him a warm welcome and look forward to having him as an integral part of the team.

ANNOUNCING PTOLUS

Ptolus, Monte Cook's famous urban campaign setting, is coming to life as a deluxe 640-page setting sourcebook. In this huge, full-color tome, Cook promises a level of detail and inventiveness rarely found in campaign settings, noting that "The massive *Ptolus* book is devoted entirely to a single city. Readers will find a depth in *Ptolus* that they have not seen before, with its unique history, myriad groups struggling for power, and characters going well beyond the norms of traditional fantasy." In addition to being a unique setting, the tome includes a double-sided map sheet, two-dozen handouts, and three bound-in cloth bookmarks.



One of the big ideas behind *Ptolus* is that the setting has been shaped around the D&D rules, rather than forcing the rules to bend to fit the setting. "While *Ptolus* is based strongly in a kind of historical reality, this setting was designed primarily with the assumptions the game implies. Monsters, magic, and fighters in plate mail with magic swords lie at the center of it all. If you love the d20 System, you will find yourself at home here," says Cook. In fact, Ptolus served as one of the original playtest settings for the third edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. The spawning point of many of D&D's current rules, *Ptolus* showcases numerous ideas originally considered for third edition that couldn't fit into the core rules. Also, Ptolus has served as Monte Cook's personal campaign, run for some of the biggest names in gaming—such as Bruce Cordell, Jesse Decker, Erik Mona, Chris Perkins, Sean Reynolds, and more—since 1998. From monster-riddled dungeons to dangerous dealings with crime lords, you're sure to find your favorite parts of fantasy gaming in, or under, the streets of Ptolus.

You can find out more about the *Ptolus* setting at **montecook.com/ptolus.** *Ptolus* will arrive in game stores in August 2006. *–J.D.*

SHARK!

See us
August 18-21
Indiana
Convention Center
Indianapolis, IN
GEN CON
BOOTH 509

The most powerful predator of this era, the great white shark, would be merely a snack for the mighty Megalodon who lived when monsters roamed the Earth. The largest shark to ever swim the oceans of the world, the enormous Megalodon, ate whales for breakfast, literally! This terror of the deep has been estimated to have been up to 100 ft. in length by some scientists. The teeth of these huge beasts could rip through the scales of a dragon like a dagger through a hapless npc. That's the kind of power you want when going into battle. And now you can have it! Our newest Dwarven Stones® are made from the teeth of a Megalodon that lived 25 to 1.6 million years ago.

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FORGOTTEN REALMS®

CRIMMOR

city of caravans

BY ED GREENWOOD

ILLUSTRATED BY VINCENT DUTRAIT

THE CROSSROADS OF

AMN

BROUGHT TO LIFE FOR

YOUR CAMPAIGN

"Crimmor, City of Caravans, what shall I say of thee?

"The life-blood of half Faerûn streams through thy streets, by coin and creaking wagon-wheel. Here Amn works for its glittering gold, and by such striving half the Sword Coast North is fed, and fine-work of a thousand-thousand hands sets forth to remote stead and backland croft.

"Crimmor, where barge, drover, and wagon are lords, work never ceases, and folk can sleep through din worthy of a siege.

"Crimmor, the beating heart of the haughty Merchants' Domain, bones beneath the striding skin of gold. No man is truly a caravan master, who has not passed through Crimmor."

Mandivvur Taeruld, Sage of Amn,
Tales of a City Unsleeping [1342 DR]

CRIMMOR IS ONE OF THE most bustling places any Faerûnian will ever see. All night long, in all but the worst weather, lanterns blaze in the arches of its open gates and glimmer above the Alandor docks, so work can continue. Wagons creak and rumble along the streets day and night, and the air is filled with the crack of whips, the shouts of drovers, the bellows of oxen, and the jingling of harnesses.

The stink of ox dung hangs strong over the city and clings—thanks to the river-damp—to all clothes hung to dry unless they are draped in the scent-mist wardrobe chambers of the wealthy or of the most expensive launderers.

When the winds blow from the east (a thankfully rare occurrence), the reek from Upriver (the bankside tanneries, paddocks, and slaughterhouses) is chokingly thick. The rest of the time, a thin haze of hoof-flung dust hangs over the city, and the smells of laboring draft-beasts are strong and ever present.

Except to the west, where the estates of the wealthy sprawl along the River Road for half a day's ride, and due east where the tanneries, warehouses, and carriage-sheds line the Lake Way halfway to Amnwater, Crimmor is surrounded by caravan-yards.

Land spanning the flight of a ballista-bolt (fired from the great but seldom-used engines of war atop the gray granite city wall towers) out from the walls is kept clear of encampment and building by decree of the mayor. This "Keepclear" is used by Crimmans for moots, walks, and sward-feasts.[1]

A few trees[2] on either side of the Orc Road mark the limit of the Keepclear; beyond is a great expanse of paddocks where arriving caravans camp and departing caravans muster.

By law, only oxen or mules "badged"[3] by a citizen of Crimmor are allowed to haul any wagon or cart into the city or along any Crimman street. Such teams are hired dozens of times daily to go out, hitch onto a wagon from an arriving caravan and bring it in to the city. Small local-delivery drovers take their mule-carts out, too, and "cry carry" (call for business) to fetch less-than-a-wagonload cargoes (strongchests, crates, kegs, and coffers) from caravan wagons to city addresses. Crimman ox-teams make frequent runs from the docks right across the city and out to paddocks, transferring bargeloads to waiting wagons (or to bankside warehouses upriver, to await carriage later).

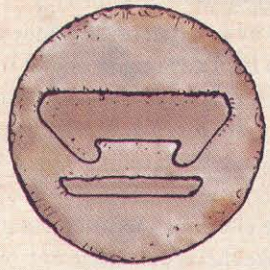
By law, all shore-docks for barges must be located within the Crimmor Shore (the stretch of bank enclosed by the city walls), to prevent barges from being run ashore anywhere up and down the Alandor to evade inspection and fees. As a result, the city is always choked with traffic, which is why the major streets bear bright gold wheel-plaques warning folk that wagons have right of way.

Crimmans seem used to the smells and the constant noisy bustle. Visitors often find sleep comes hard for their first tenday or so. Most find it far more pleasant out in the paddocks, even with all the lowing and neighing.

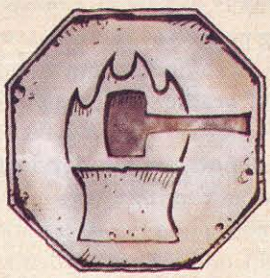
Greed keeps the streets busy at night, but such "moon work" is made possible because Crimmans and visitors alike feel safe: the Crimmor Guard is vigilant and mounts numerous patrols against gangs, thuggery in the shadows, and brawls. Everyone knows that "No thief thrives in Crimmor."

Crimmans are quite proud of that last belief, and it's largely true: the Shadow Thieves maintain a self-enforced no-theft policy within

1. A "sward-feast" is literally "a meal on the grass," or what we might call a picnic. Crimmans who can spare the time to get away for such meals enjoy them from dawn to dusk, sprawling on cloaks and blankets to enjoy flasks of wine and simple meals. Laborers might dine on wheels of strong onion-and-parsley cheese, "throus" (th-ROO-ss)—the local name for leeks—smoked meats and Alandor drusk (a large, sluggish, flavorful catfishlike bottom-feeder), and spiced handloaves of bread. Wealthier folk might eat just about anything: "sizzle-skewers" of seven quail marinated in spiced wine are the current favorite.
2. Well climbed by local children, these are duskwoods (with a scattering of felsul) protected from the axe by decree. Only bold local lovers dare to meet in the trees after dusk these days, as some caravan-riders think it good sport to play pranks on paramours. The Orc Road runs south to Purskul.
3. Owned by a tax-paying citizen and bearing a large numbered brass badge stamped with the wagon-on-barge symbol of Crimmor and graven with the owner's name to prove it. Citizens' riding-horses and coach-horses can also traverse the city streets, if they bear similar badges. Both sorts of badges are issued by the Thaeldorn. They're easily counterfeited, but no one does so, because the Shadow Thieves have let it be known that every false badge is worth one finger—severed from the user.

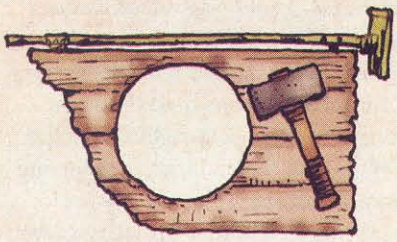


The Badge of Crimmor

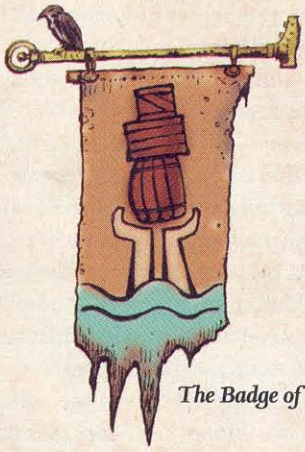


The Badge of Smiths

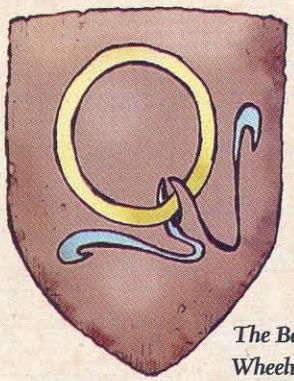
The Badge of Leatherers



The Badge of Wagonmakers



The Badge of Dockhands



The Badge of Wheelwrights

Crimmor's walls.[4] However, Crimmans know to "guard your glint," showing as little of valuable wares as possible to public gaze—because Shadow Thief spies are everywhere in the city, identifying what's being shipped where so choice items can be stolen on the way from Crimmor to elsewhere.

What Meets the Eye

Crimmor is a city of stone—dirty stone. Road-dirt coats the lowest story of its tall, narrow stone buildings (built touching each other, with many small balconies jutting out over streets, well above the height of the tallest loaded wagons), the cobbled streets are well-worn with wagon-ruts, and not a hand-span of land is "wasted" on gardens, parks, or greenery (the saying "No tree grows in Crimmor" is both old and apt).

Most buildings rise four to six stories tall, above a single level of low-ceilinged cellar, broken up by massive stone supports. They have ornately-carved stone fronts (adorned with gargoyles and fanciful "ardragons"),[5] tall and narrow windows (typically as wide as four mens' palms across) with vertically overlapping sliding panes of blown, bubble-studded Amn glass (most houses have

Crimmor

Crimmor (Large City): Conventional; AL N; 75,000 gp limit (increased due to abundant business and trade); Assets 75,000,000 gp; Population 20,000; Mixed (human 78%, halflings 13%, half-orcs 8%, half-elves 1%).

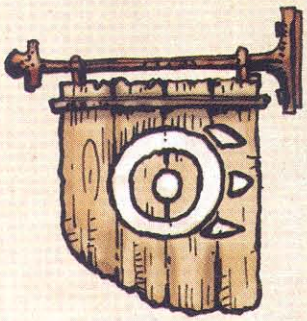
Authority Figures: Corlyn Braen, mayor of Crimmor (NG male human ranger 4); Lady Lamia Crytrapper, mistress of the Crytrapper family (NG human female ranger 6); Mikaal Krimmevol, local head of the Krimmevol family (NG male fighter 4); Lady Zharnn Ophal, the Dragon Lady, matron of the Ophal family (CE female human rogue 7); Branwyn Vaupel, youngest High Sword of the Crimman Guard (LG female human fighter 5).

Important Characters: Lydan Prowl, detective within the Crimman Guard (NG male halfling ranger 2/rogue 2); Yugo Reft, boss of the Dockhands (LE half-orc fighter 6); Madame Alistimra Tamm, proprietor of the Pearl (N female human rogue 4/sorcerer 2); Tehrinna the Towering, owner of Tymoran Trails (NG female human fighter 5); Jalantha Truard, hostess, informant, and connoisseur of Crimman society (CN female half-elf rogue 2); Zan Zoldaftel, leader of the Wheelwrights (LG human male fighter 2/expert 6).

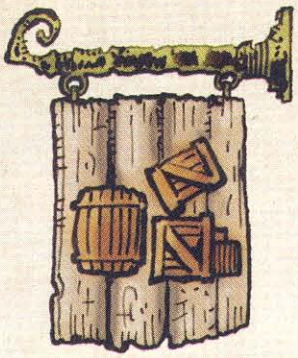
In Times Past

Crimmor was first detailed in the 1997 second-edition boxed set *Lands of Intrigue*, written by Steven E. Schend. The text of that out-of-print product can be downloaded for free from the "Downloads" section of Wizards of the Coast's DUNGEONS & DRAGONS website (**wizards.com/dnd**). This article augments the information given therein rather than replacing it.

4. This prohibition on thieving extends to Crimmor's barge docks, all Upriver warehouses owned by Crimmans, and all the Westward estates of wealthy Crimmans. The Shadow Thieves actually hunt and attack those intruding on the Crytrapper lands. The origins of the no-theft policy lie in a promise made by the Guild Master of Thieves to the Crytrappers decades ago, in return for the Crytrappers providing alibis and hiding stolen goods that enabled the Master and four senior Thieves to retain their lives when ostensibly "caught in crimson" (or caught red-handed). The Shadow Thieves even act against visiting thieves and Crimman amateurs; as a result, only small snatch-and-grab opportunistic thefts of individual, portable items occur—and thieves are often exposed if they try to sell their ill-gotten gains inside Crimmor.



Wagons Have Right of Way



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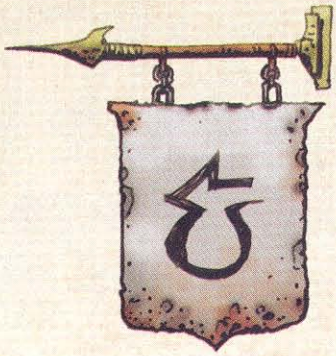
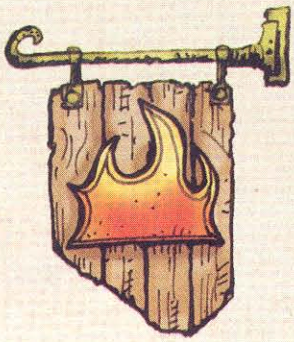


Sale Inside This Shop



Remembrance Feast Inside

Common Crimman Names

The naming conventions of Crimmor are indicative of those used throughout Northern Amn. Examples of some of the most common of these names follow.

Surnames	Male Given Names	Female Given Names
Alduth	Balcovan	Araumma
Chanthrai	Buld	Belaerra
Darneth	Corl	Cormildra (Corra)
Hallowfar	Corwar	Delfae
Hezmur	Feldyn	Faelra
Istur	Gors	Isruldra (Ismae, Ruldra)
Nellard	Harando	Jaumithra (Jitha)
Orsil	Jarsen	Meirivele
Pendrake	Malvan	Murarra (Mura)
Qorst	Morulд	Nuele
Rithtyn	Revril	Phintra
Sunder	Tace	Sarasra
Telstune	Terivar	Umae
Velauntur	Yundren (Yund)	Vauve

"window-poles" ending in hooks for sliding panes up and down), and steeply-pitched tile roofs with corner downspouts.

Amn gets a lot of rain in short but fierce downpours that tend to happen twice or thrice almost every morning. There are narrow but deep center-street channels (gutters) for carrying rainwater down to the Alandor, but most storms overburden them, sluicing dung off the cobbles and making necessary the "big step up" front stone threshold of most Crimman buildings.

Cold, clinging river-mists (sometimes thick enough to be called fogs) develop in wee morning hours and drift through the northernmost streets until banished by the sun. On overcast mornings the mists linger.

A visitor looking across Crimmor sees a lot of tall, narrow, side-walls-touching gray buildings, stained brown to just above the height of a tall man, with ornate carvings around arrow slit windows.[6] Tile roofs of dark brown, green, or blue rise past gables to wedge or "ax-blade" roof peaks, creating a skyline of blades dominated by the upthrusting spires of The Pearl (an exclusive short-stay inn, formerly the Mother of Pearl Boarding House) and the Thaeldorn (the huge, many-turreted house of governance).

Most buildings in Crimmor are in good repair because the gaudy dress so essential to social status in Athkatla here takes second place to having fine coaches, walking-sticks, homes, luggage, and tools in the best of shape. Nothing impresses a Crimman so much as a "proper earner" (which means *very* nice) tool or implement.

Conversely, although "proper" buildings should be solidly built of stone and in good repair, overly gaudy ornate balcony railings and statuary are regarded as frippery promoted by those with "too little coin to buy their own confidence." The three local "grand families" (the Ophals, Krimmevols, and Crytrappers) are exceptions to this, of course—but they exhibit *their* good taste by hiding ornate architectural splendors away behind elegant stone walls and coach-sized, coin-shaped gates.

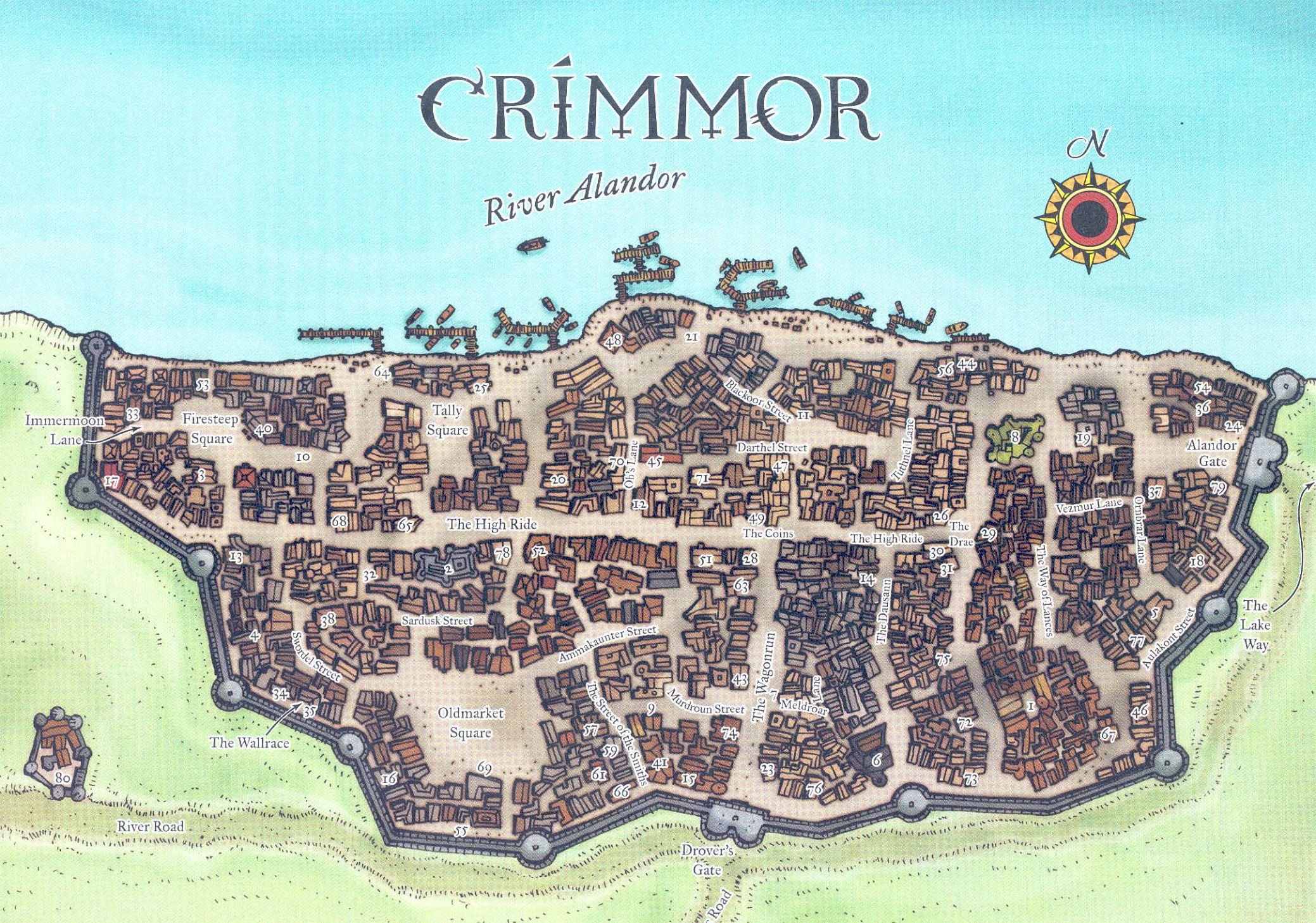
The Streets

Crimmor can comfortably house 75,000 folk and—with a bit of crowding—find room for 100,000; in winter, it's usually home to just over 20,000. Its two major streets are The High Ride (known to locals simply as "the High"), that aside from a swing to the riverbank just west of the Alandor Gate (the Eastern city gate), runs due east-west through the heart of the city; and the Wagonrun ("the Run"), which runs north-south from the High to

5. These massive stone support pillars are necessary because Crimmor is built on hardened river ooze over uneven bedrock—thankfully without any known springs of water inside its walls—and many buildings are in a constant slow state of settling in one direction or another, developing alarming leans fought against by hammering in props and shoring up sinking supports. "Ardragons" are mythical carved stone scaled mock-dragons that sprout any number of heads, clawed limbs, tails, and reptilian wings, their bodies and tails being sculpted impossibly thin and long to curl around windows and other wall features. Some of them have served as handy climbing-aids, but the slings of the Guard largely keep them from being dove-roosts.

6. The term "arrowslit" is considered insulting in Crimmor; outlanders are advised that the current term of admiration for architecture or garments is "djauncesome, really *djaunce*some!" (Pronounce this "Duh-JOHN-sss," with a long "sss" and a very short, indrawn "duh.") Crimman windows are properly called "exalted" rather than "narrow."

Crimman buildings are called town houses if used as the residence of one individual or family or grand houses if especially large and luxurious of architecture. Grander walled compounds (usually enclosing a tall domicile, a stables, and perhaps a separate guesthouse or personal warehouse) are referred to as manors. (In this part of Amn, a villa is considered a passé, overly-fanciful name for a country house—*never* a city home.) The vast majority of buildings in the city have a ground-floor shop (perhaps with a separate shop in the cellar or offices on the floor above) and apartments above. These are known as rises, with a "coinrise" being entirely rented out to businesses (if anyone dwells there, up in the attic, it's the owner or a doorwarden—door-guard and caretaker—for the building), and a "chamber-rise" being entirely rented out, either room by room or suite by suite, as private dwellings.


CRIMMOR
River Alandor
N
Immermoon Lane
Firesteep Square
Tally Square
Blackoor Street
Darthel Street
Ol's Lane
Turhnel Lane
Alandor Gate
Vezmur Lane
Ornbrar Lane
The High Ride
The Coins
The High Ride
The Drae
The Way of Lances
The Lake Way
Sardusk Street
Ammakaunter Street
Swordel Street
The Dausamn
Aulakont Street
Murdroun Street
The Wagonrun
Meldroar Lane
The Street of the Smiths
Oldmarket Square
The Wallrace
River Road
Drover's Gate

CITY OF CRIMMOR MAP KEY

1. The Thaeldorn (court, civic building, mayor's residence)
2. The Pearl (luxury inn)
3. Tymoran Trails (inn)
4. Sorntalar's Rest (inn)
5. Chauntea's Cradle (temple)
6. The Theater of Joy (shared temple of Lliira, Milil, and Sune)
7. Allfaiths Altarhall (many-faiths shared shrine)
8. Crystalgates Manor (Krimmevol family mansion)
9. Durndraaven Manor (Ophal family mansion)
10. Gaskrel's (boarding house)
11. Ivyposts (boarding house)
12. Redbanners House (boarding house)
13. Brightshields (boarding house)
14. Alessan House (boarding house)
15. Suldrakh's (boarding house)
16. Moongables (boarding house)
17. Delthorn's Haven (boarding house)
18. Melpurth House (boarding house)
19. The Emir's Court (tavern: excellent, expensive)
20. Drovers' Drink (tavern: fair, moderately priced)
21. Ralory's Redtarge (tavern: poor, cheap)
22. The Bright Fish (tavern: good, expensive)
23. Athtel's (tavern: good, moderately priced)
24. The Burning Wagon (tavern: fair, cheap)
25. Darsil's Casks (tavern: poor, cheap)
26. Braezel's (club: fair, moderately priced)
27. The Dancing Drover (club: fair, moderately priced)
28. Harnsar's Board (club: good, expensive)
29. The Old Wheel (club: good, expensive)
30. Salamantha's Sundown (club: excellent, expensive)
31. The Zultail (club: good, expensive)
32. The Pearl Stables
33. The Trails Stables
34. The Sorntalar Stables
35. Safehaven Stables
36. Aszrim's Stables
37. Maunk's Safe Carriagehouse
38. The Caravan Roof (Coach, Cart, and Wagon Storage), sharing premises with Thulmar's Coach Rentals & Repairs
39. Delnur's Matchless Cart Rentals & Repairs
40. Zoldaftel Wagons
41. Rolling Wheel Wagons
42. Hemmishield Carts & Carriages
43. Nelvor's Wagons
44. Eskel's Barges and Wagons
45. Thelgorn's Cages, Tents, & Carts
46. Longbow Wagons
47. Quarren's Wagons
48. Felnar's Faithful Beasts (horses, oxen, draft animals bought & sold)
49. Xornavar's Armory (new and used weapons and gear)
50. Clawthorn's Curios (creature parts, trophies, and distillates)
51. The Blushing Rose Decorators (paints, trim, furnishings; statuary copied)
52. Thulvan Importing (huge selection: Tethyrian crockery, Calishite brass)
53. Maukbarl's Brewcasks (brewery)
54. Crimmorquaff House (brewery)
55. Julkin's Barrels (cider house)
56. Kelvaert's Anvil (smithy: hasps, hinges, house fittings, locks and bolts)
57. Undarr's Troughs, Spouts, Funnels, & Pipes (smithy)
58. Zorn Selvyn, Finesmith (wire, fine-work, tools, rings and fine fastenings)
59. Melgor Darsander, Locks, Strongboxes, & Armor (smithy)
60. Orntalar Chainworks (smithy)
61. Darvo the Dwarf (smithy: repairs and swift-work)
62 Engelstarn & Storm (smithy: ornate scrollwork, castings, inlays and plating)
63. Handurzunn House (shop: fruit, roots, and vegetables)
64. Gelkurt's Fresh & Finest (fishmonger and Alandor eel-pie bakery)
65. Farhorizons House (herbs and spices shop)
66. Imaego Invarr (butcher, smokehouse)
67. Zornflames Bakery
68. Maerlee's Window (bake shop)
69. Haelvan Hardroll Cheeseworks
70. Ivnarr Barrelworks (cooper)
71. Bustran Telbanner, Caravan Carpenter (strongchests, caskets, carry-coffers, and custom-built crates)
72. Vauve's Fine Scrolltubes, Coffers, and Jewelboxes (shop)
73. Belnar's Bootery (shop: boots, shoes, leatherwork)
74. Tethchaith's Saddles & Harness
75. Roldskull's Tomes, Maps & Folios
76. Paeraetor Luteworks & Trumpets (musical instrument shop)
77. Yauncel Darth, Lore & Sagecraft
78. Woazgoaz the Weaver (shop)
79. Sangalorr Fine Flowers (shop: live plants of all sorts, scents, perfumes)
80. Crytrapper Hall (Crytrapper family mansion)
81. Crytrapper Hill (The Hillwarrens)
82. Silent Hill (burial crypts)

Drovers' Gate (where the Orc Road begins) at about Crimmor's midpoint.

Crimmor is divided into three wards by these streets: everything north of the High is River Ward, everything west of the Run is Wheel Ward, and everything east of the Run is Purse Ward. The busiest street-moot in Crimmor is the Coins, where the High and the Run meet, but the most interesting moot is The Drae, just west of the High's riverbank swing, where the street known as the Dausann ("DAW-sah-nnn") splits off south (and loops around westward, just inside the city wall, to rejoin the High some way to the west). The Drae is where folk go to be seen entering the most elegant clubs.

Drudgebucket Matters

Strong, fast-flowing springs of drinkable water arise on Crytrapper Hill, immediately west of the city; they were why Crimmor was founded on this site in 163 DR. Drinking their waters is (falsely) believed to cure plague, and they flow to the nearest city wall-tower through a midair pipe between hill and turret. From there, it's piped along the walls and thence across the city. Almost all buildings tap the flow with spigots, handpumps, and cisterns.

Any visitor foolish enough to drink from the Alandor can expect to be violently ill for a day or so (locals are more used to it), and

"highnoses" (snooty folk) can buy "clearwater" in ornate stoppered flagons (6 sp for about a gallon) brought in from the crystal-clear waters of Weeping Princess Pool, a fancifully-named rainwater pool four hills southwest of the city.

Waste—from broken items to rotting food and chamberpot-waste—is collected from dawn to dusk by slowly, continuously moving drudgebucket wagons, whose drovers blow double-note fluted pipes at each door to signal their arrival; inhabitants hasten out and dump for a copper coin per bucket (any container one person can carry to the wagon unaided). The wagons run south down the Orc Road to pits three hills away from Crimmor.

Rats and mice are everywhere in Crimmor (where dogs and cats are banned, except as caged food cargoes just moving through) and are cheerfully slain with slung stones, poison, and drowning-traps whenever seen.

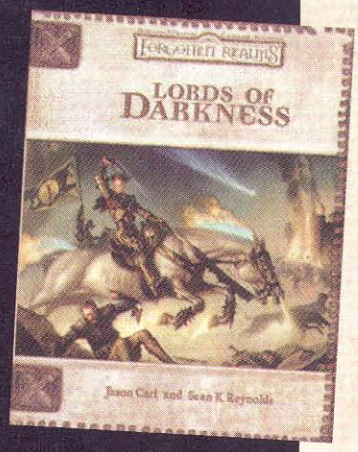
A number of tightly-sealed warehouses around the city are granaries maintained by the Thaeldorn as food supplies against siege, famine, plague, or severe winter "snowbound" times, and there are also secret (that is, unofficial but whispered about across the city) granary caverns under Crytrapper Hill. These Hillwarrens are guarded and used by the Shadow Thieves to hide contraband, supplies, wounded, or on-the-run members; in return, they don't steal in Crimmor. The entrances to the Hillwarrens are truly secret, but thought to include Crytrapper Hall and various city buildings (via long tunnels).

Folk who die in Crimmor are washed, shaved (and the hair sold for use in wigs and as stuffing), and loaded on a corpses-only drudge-wagon to be taken a long way east of the city, to a place where clerics burn them. Only the wealthiest are buried in crypts inside Silent Hill (southwest of the city, just beyond the Keepclear). In either case, funeral services are day long, casual come-and-go remembrance feasts held in the homes of the dead.

The Shadow Thieves

As much a part of Amnian life as commerce, the powerful thieves and assassins guild known as the Shadow Thieves comprise an institution nearly as respected as the ruling Council of Six. Originating from distant Waterdeep, the guild's power in that metropolis was shattered amid blood and deception in 1298 DR, culminating in the organization's banishment. Moving their operations to Athkatla, the Shadow Thieves diversified their illicit aims, divided their structure into one of numerous interlocking guilds, and swiftly dominated illegal activity in Amn.

Today, the Shadow Thieves control the majority of criminal operations along the Sword Coast, maintaining their greatest base of power within Amn. From their hidden headquarters in Athkatla, the group's leaders, the Shadow Council, covetously guard the organization's secrets, making the exact numbers of guild members, locations of safe houses, and potential targets impossible to know. The multifaceted organization of the Shadow Thieves also makes it so that should one sect be rooted out, the guild's enemies reveal little of the group's other operations. Such is the extreme secrecy of the organization that the most powerful member of the Shadow Council, Rhinnom Dannihyr, also sits upon Amn's ruling body, the Council of Six.



While the Shadow Thieves' goals encompass all illicit dealings—aimed at bringing its members far greater wealth and power—the guild also holds a deep grudge against Waterdeep and its lords, swearing to someday return to the city from which it was banished.

The Shadow Thieves guild is thoroughly detailed in *Lords of Darkness*.

Sights and Shopping

Shops typically open from "mist-clear" (a short time after dawn) to dusk, and are shuttered the rest of the time (although they might receive deliveries and re-stock at all hours). Items are tagged with prices (switching tags avails no one as there are no laws requiring items to be sold for the tagged price), and shopkeepers have many young assistants to hover over customers. Most people ask upon entry to signal urgency for an item; if they smile and wave, they want to browse until they signal an assistant. All shops wrap purchases unless otherwise arranged.

It's been said one can buy anything in Crimmor—or have anything expertly copied, repaired, or altered. Every shop is busy, but the mayor has decreed that no one should be able to outbid other customers for swifter service (driving the practice into secrecy and higher prices, rather than entirely eliminating it). Most shops are cluttered, noisy, and busy; customers who break wares must buy them, and haggling must be swift or the keeper will end it with a chop of the hand and an, "*Enough,* lowcoin!"

There are five Crimman guilds: the Dockhands, the Leatherers, the Wagonmakers, the Smiths, and the Wheelwrights (who also represent most of the Drovers after the three grand families, fearing stiff fee increases, persuaded the mayor to not allow drovers to found their own guild). Rather than having guildmasters—susceptible

to being bought by the grand families—they elect small, short-term ruling councils.

The province of each guild currently stands as follows: the Dockhands control all loading and unloading on the docks (working with barge and wagon crews). The Leatherers are dominated by very good harness-makers, saddlers, and bootmakers (Crimman boots are hobnailed and durable, yet stylish). The Wagonmakers (dominated by the famous Zan Zoldaftel)[7] lubricate the flow of business throughout the city and beyond. The Smiths specialize in wagon fittings, but also in chain (fine to massive), fastenings (screw, hook-and-eye, bolts, and so on) the usual hinges, locks and lockplates, and—surprisingly—wire. Finally, the Wheelwrights, due to their needs for particular woods cut just so, dominate carpenters, and—through their drover members—woodcutters who bring firewood to Crimmor from the foothills of the Cloud Peaks.[8]

Crimmans are hard workers, eager investors (willing to take chances, but shrewd), and innovators. As the saying goes, "A lazy Crimman is a sick Crimman."

Inns

Crimmor has merely three inns, but many rooming-houses. Inns offer full meals, laundry and bathing services, larger rooms, and much higher prices than rooming-houses. Merchants staying in a Spartan rooming-house can rent stabling and carriage-storage at an inn (most inns own several stables and carriage-sheds, with their own staff and guards, located streets away from the inn proper).

The Pearl

This rebuilt former grand family palace that was for years an increasingly infamous seedy rooming-house, is the tallest building in the city, its spectacular spires and curving upswept roofs impressive landmarks. It offers the most luxurious visitors' accommodations in Crimmor.[9]

Sorntalar's Rest

As its name implies, this small backstreet establishment offers quiet. Rooms are hung with tapestries, halls are carpeted, walls are thick and noisy guests are often asked to leave. Owner Aumra Sorntalar is a no-nonsense, bustling little woman who leads gangs of staffers to deal swiftly with problems, clean up messes, and see to the comfort of guests. A stern finger-tapping of her deep purple lips to signal quiet is her constant habit.

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7. Zan Zoldaftel is a LG human male fighter 2/expert 6 who allegedly makes the best wagons and carts one can buy anywhere. They're distinguished by a magical "ZZ" mark cast by his daughter Rhieldra (LG human female Sorcerer 2; unmarried, she lives with her widowed father and serves briskly and efficiently as his business manager). His ex-apprentices, now friendly competitors ("Old Zan" is well-liked and respected), form the bulk of the guild, making Crimman wagons justly famous.
8. Where Faerûn's first-ever tree farms are being established, with deliberate replantings of ash and oak (for wagon wheels and frames), duskwood (for building), and in swampy ground, fast-growing silverbark (for firewood, after a season of drying).
9. The Pearl also offers most attentive service, featuring (as the saying goes) "hot and cold-running servants" of the utmost discretion. All Pearl staff are literate, immaculately uniformed, long-serving, and loyal. A stay at the Pearl, in a suite and with all costs included (meals, drinks, stabling, the works) typically costs 12 gp per person (cheapest rooms are 10 gp/night). Many merchants stay at the Pearl for just their first night in Crimmor to bathe, launder, and gorge themselves.

Tymoran Trails

This large inn offers guests a rustic tavern-taproom-like drinking lounge on the ground floor. It's noisy, crowded, and popular at all hours, so the three floors of rooms above are recommended only to the hard-of-hearing. Many fun-loving local women come to the Trails for companionship, as do "ladies of coin" looking for business from visiting merchants, so the noise often spreads to the rooms. Staff guards patrol against lawless rowdiness. The Trails is owned by the striking Tehrinna the Towering.[10]

Rooming Houses

Crimmor holds dozens of rooming houses that offer fresh-made beds, chamberpots, water-basins, and taps in otherwise Spartan private rooms, with doorguards but no meals or other services, for 6 sp per night up to 1 gp per night in the high summer season. They are all much the same, aside from one or two disguised brothels that offer room visits from "house girls" (negotiated fees extra). A few are quiet, private places, but most are large, bustling, and close to taverns and major moots. "Quiet" houses include Gaskrel's on Immermoon Lane and Ivyposts on Blackoor Street. "Big" houses include Redbanners House and Brightshields on The High, and Alessan House on The Dausann.

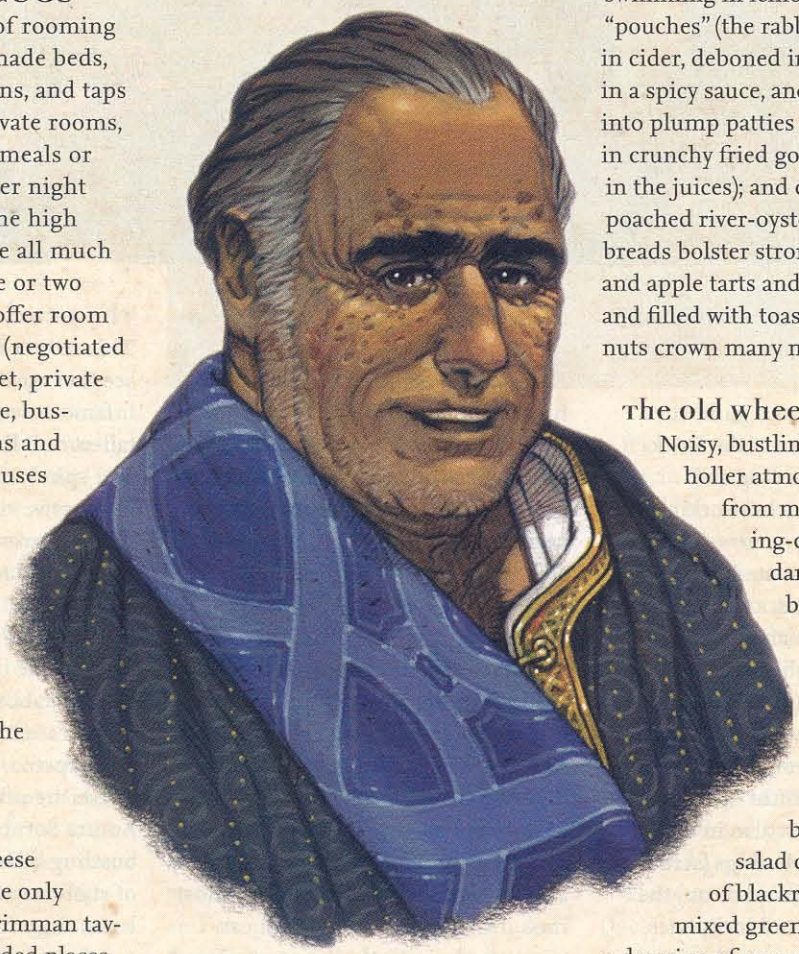
Taverns

Smoked oysters, fried cheese breads, and pickles are the only food to be had at most Crimman taverns—noisy, smoky, crowded places that concentrate on pouring as much cider and ale down patrons' throats as possible.

The Drover's Drink is a cozy, rundown, bare-wood but well-lit fixture where brawling is discouraged. Ralory's Redtarge, nigh the docks, is the place to pick fights and break bones. The Bright Fish is where younglings go to eye each other, giggle, and show off to the accompaniment of the latest wild minstrelry, outrageously bawdy songs, and declaimed poems.

Clubs

Most of these large, cavernous places were created by joining the upstairs floors of several adjacent buildings to create a sprawling maze of dimly-lit dining-halls, dance-floors, and private booths. Beautiful hostesses serve drinks (and often more!) in the curtained-off booths, but the dining halls are where many Crimmans eat their main meal of the day, come to talk (gossip and sideline business), and to hire (adventurers, guards, new shop staff, and "go look see" and delivery lads). Drinks and food are always more expensive at clubs than at inns or taverns.



Mayor Corlyn Braen

Local hostess Jalantha Truard offers some brief club reviews:

Harnsar's Board

Hearty false "welcoming homestead" decor: all warm smells, candlewheels overhead, cozy nooks, and rough floorboards. Obliging but sometimes bewildered service to a patronage largely of outlanders and old folk. Wonderful, oft messy food such as pan-roasted, peppered sweetbreads swimming in lemon sauce; rabbit "pouches" (the rabbit is marinated in cider, deboned into shards, stewed in a spicy sauce, and then tucked into plump patties and drenched in crunchy fried goat cheese to seal in the juices); and creamy, foamy poached river-oyster soup. Spiced breads bolster strong-cheese platters, and apple tarts and pears scooped out and filled with toasted, candied walnuts crown many meals.

The Old Wheel

Noisy, bustling, dance-and-holler atmosphere distracts from many small dining-chambers apt to be dark and forgotten by servers. Greens-platters (salads) a specialty: diced fresh apples cascade like gemstones over a warm long-bean-and-radish salad cloaked in a crust of blackrind cheese; cold mixed greens are drenched in a dressing of groundspears (asparagus) juice in which mint and prawns have been stewed; soft-boiled quail eggs adorn a bed of parsley and fried ground-moss. Main dishes are a justly famous roast rothé, served standing

10. This 7-foot-tall, red-haired NG human female fighter 5 is a wealthy former adventurer of forceful character, good humor, and striking looks, who for years has been the lover of Mikaal Krimmevol, best friend of the current mayor (and local leader of the grand Krimmevol family, whose sprawling Crimman mansion occupies an entire block of the city).

thick and smoky in a puddle of wine gravies and drippings; rich, buttery smoked Athkatlan harpfish coated in crushed black peppercorns and sweet treebark syrup; and superb slabs of venison glistening dark under drizzles of honey-ginger. Bowls of sugared berries and pears poached in sweet liqueurs finish most meals.

Salamantha's Sundown

Highnosed (haughty), all draperies, hushed tones, the latest luxurious Athkatlan fashions, and coldly polite service. Large, quiet, and respectable, with fast and numerous "blackjerkins" (brawl-quelling security staff).

A large wine cellar bolsters meager servings of superb grilled grouse marinated in rosemary, sage, and cinammon; mustardy Alandor crayfish; and the ever-popular seared boar chops. Successful retired Crimmans come here to moan about the old days.

The Zultail

Named for a mythical sly and mysterious wizard from the East, who in local tales settled in Crimmor centuries ago and played tricks on children, this newest of city clubs affects a sensual "dance, purr, and find a booth" air. The 'Tail is warm and *very* dimly lit with ruby-red candle-lanterns. Discreet, gliding staff keep close eye on the fun and are swift to refresh empty flagons. Food is too often drowned in sticky-sweet shoodra sauce (a caramel-hued sugary concoction made from cooked-to-jelly oranges, mangoes, and pears) and crowned with too many cherries and berries, but standouts include velvety braised clam and mushrooms; lamb glazed in mustard-sugar and served on a bed of chicken liver stew; and hand-sized softbread rolls into which diced fried onions have been baked.

The Hand of Justice

Four factors keep Crimmor fairly safe and law-abiding: the vigilance of citizens (no Amnian wants wealth stolen from him), the covert interventions of the Shadow Thieves, the rough enthusiasm of the Bargemen of Crimmor (who constantly patrol the River Road, the river itself, and the docks and wear tabards emblazoned with the wagon-on-barge symbol of Crimmor), and the dozen-strong and numerous street patrols of the Crimmor Guard (who wear chainmail under their tabards, bear longswords and daggers, and sling stones with practiced accuracy).[11]

The Thaeldorn (a term that means both "palace of the mayor" and the officials who work in it) pride themselves on swift justice, which means apprehended persons are brought before a suzier (SOO-zeer) or magistrate—often the mayor himself on the same day they're dragged to a "lockup"

11. All members of the Crimmor Guard wear red tabards emblazoned in gold with the wagon-on-barge of Crimmor while on duty. They also all wear gauntlets, helms, and thigh-high boots fitted with pouches filled with leather thongs, leg-hobbles (of stiff leather), and collar-and-leashes (all used for trussing and then controlling prisoners). They are of four ranks: guardsword, helm (patrol leader), resker (jailer and helm commander), and high sword (four high swords report directly to the mayor and serve as Guard trainers and militia commanders). Look for red "teardrops of blood" above tabard city badges to learn the rank: guardswords have none, helms have one, reskers have two, and high swords bear three.

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(there are ground-floor holding cells in every wall-tower, and a long-term-incarceration dungeon under the Thaeldorn; all trials are held in courtrooms in the Thaeldorn), or before highsun the next day, if "taken" during the night. The suzier may remand a prisoner into custody for up to three days if evidence—usually witnesses—must be found, but most cases are decided on the spot.

There are no juries in Crimmor. All trials must be public, and accused persons can speak freely (although rude tirades never help one's cause). The two oldest suziers are known to have little patience with the insolent and the sly-tongued, but the mayor and the four younger suziers are often swayed by "fair pleading."

It's been said with some truth that "Crimmor's laws are whatever the mayor[12] says they are, and he speaks differently when the accused is wealthy than he does when a prisoner has few coins," but justice in Crimmor is based on the Code of Crimmor (simplified within the Sentences and Crimes sidebars).

Inability to pay fines or damages is mitigated by seizure of property and then enforced hard labor until work value satisfies court debt. Citizens are defined as persons who are recorded as owning land, paying rent, or residing in Crimmor for at least a season.

Wheelmoot

Once a year, when ice and snow make the overland roads impassable for draft beasts and wagons (and human-pulled sledges must be used for laborious short trips), and caravans stop running, the mayor declares the Crimman festival of Wheelmoot. Its dating varies with seasonal conditions, but its duration is always four days and four nights. All shops close except those selling food and drink (although there's no strict law against closure), everyone locks away valuables and breakables and dons masks and fanciful (or even outrageous) costumes, and drunken revelry and public dalliance becomes the order of the day. Most folk take to the streets for the entire festival, sleeping around street bonfires on cloaks provided by the mayor, and public debauchery is expected, tolerated, and even celebrated (sentences are relaxed or dismissed altogether for some crimes committed during Wheelmoot). However, lawlessness does *not* prevail: the Bargemen, Guard, and Shadow Thieves all patrol with extreme vigilance and full musterings during the festivities. The mayor sponsors large street feasts (with drink) every evening, and most clubs do ceaseless, roaring trade.

The Lost Lady

Crimmor has a famous haunting: the Lost Lady, a long-ago noblewoman of Tethyr named Esmaelae (EZZ-may-lay) whose true love, Roloran (RAUL-oh-ran) fled from her during a quarrel bearing her necklace of eyeball-sized sapphires, hid from the Guard in a secret passage, and died shut up there,

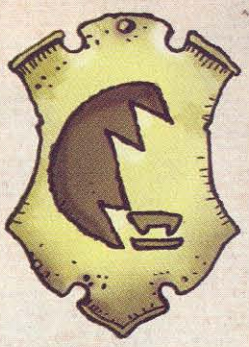
12. The mayor, officially Alandor-Lord and Thaele of Crimmon, is currently Corlyn (Corl) Braen, a fair-minded, pleasant, and well-meaning NG human male ranger 4. Burly, brown-haired, and swift to smile, he truly wants to better the lot of all Crimmans.

sentences

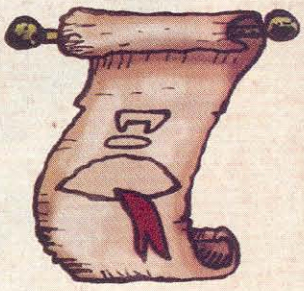
A Death (on the spot)
B Death (upon conviction)
C Exile or Ban Against Future Entry
D Branding
E Enforced Hard Labor (river dredging, street repairs, city wall repairs)
F Imprisonment (Thaeldorn dungeon)
G Imprisonment (manual work)[13]
H Fine (payable to Thaeldorn)
I Damages (payable to injured party or victim's kin)
J Edict Against Convicted[14]
K Flogging[15]

crimes

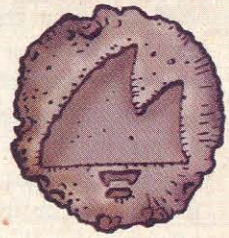
- Aiding An Attack Upon Crimmor (knowingly providing information or assistance to outlander parties desiring to damage or steal city property, poison any food or water in Crimmor, or attack, kidnap, mutilate, or maim any citizen of Crimmor): I and E then H and C
- Arson: B or E then C
- Assault Upon a Citizen Resulting in Injury: I and E or K
- Assault Upon an Outlander Resulting In Injury: I and/or G or H
- Attacking Crimmor (poisoning food or water, casting spells so as to cause building collapses or effects reasonably expected to cause multiple deaths, damage to city gates): B or E then C
- Bribery (includes Attempted Bribery): G, H (usually double bribe amount), and J
- Dealing in Stolen Goods: H and I (value of stolen goods, in both cases)
- Defacing or Forging a Public Notice: G and H
- Defiling Holy Places or Temple Theft: I, E, and J, often followed by C
- Forgery of Documents or Counterfeiting Currency: D, H and I
- Fraud: D, H, and I
- Hampering Justice: H and E[16]
- Harmful Public Spellcasting: H and I, then G (tenday maximum); if convicted is a visitor, also then C (one full year)[17]
- Harmful Spellcasting Upon Any Bargeman, Member of the Guard, the Mayor, or any Thaeldorn Official (except with permission of a higher-ranking official): A
- Impersonating any Official or Cleric: H then C
- Intimidation (includes Blackmail): H and I (double amounts demanded or taken) then K
- Murder: B or K and C (if judged unintentional)[18]
- Obstruction (parking a wagon or conveyance against any doorway or across any alley or route, so that it can't easily be traversed): H and J then F (one full day and night) if city gate or plaqued route was blocked
- Rape: I then K, D, and F
- Sedition (speaking against the rule of Amn or Crimmor, and the behaviour of specific officials): F (half a day, or overnight if trial held in the evening) plus H (25 gp set amount)
- Spellcasting in Court (harmful or otherwise, except by permission of Mayor or presiding Suzier): H and K then F (a tenday), plus I if applicable
- Theft: H and I (double value of stolen goods, in both cases) then K
- Tomb Robbing: D, H, and I
- Vandalism: H and I then K
- Violation of Any Edict: G and H (plus new trial if violation involves new offenses against Code)



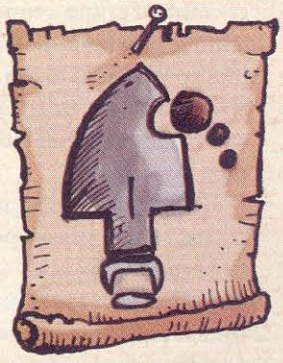
Forgery/Counterfeiting



Fraud



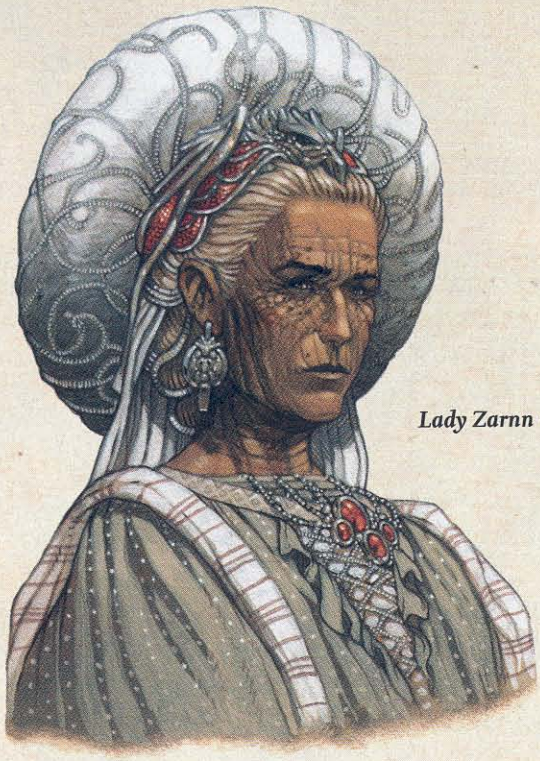
Rape



Tomb Robbing

13. Unlike hard labor, manual work means no leg-shackles for prisoners, and lighter tasks such as replacing wall-mortar, mending the roofs or chimneys of private citizens for free, clearing winter snow or ice, and emptying chamberpots.
14. An edict is a public Mayor's decree, posted at all city gates and on the doors of the Thaeldorn (and read aloud when they are first posted) forbidding a convicted individual from doing something (usually repeating the crime, but sometimes continuing in their current line of business).
15. Floggings are always with a drover's whip on the convicted's back, in public. The convicted is always stripped to the waist and wrist-manacled to restraints. Floggings are often hosted by taverns as entertainment, and a Guard patrol is always present, charged to prevent public mistreatment of the prisoner.
16. Examples of "Hampering Justice" include refusing to testify, hiding from the Guard, preventing Guard members from entry or from chasing someone or seizing something, resisting arrest, and attacking any Guard member.
17. The crime of "Harmful Public Spellcasting" includes the unleashing of magic items. It's applied to all magic use that causes damage to persons or property, or through fear or removal of support (such as a chain bearing a sign or the bridge under a mule's hooves) causes an immediate accident (a spooked horse runs down a street, spilling its wagon or damaging wares, and perhaps runs into or tramples something or someone) or suicide (of a person who, say, believes themselves afflicted with something they can't undo, or a painful and inescapable condition). If all the magic does is reveal or cause a subject to reveal his own wrongdoing, a charge is usually brought but no conviction ensues.
18. Killings done in attempts to prevent any crime in the Code receive lesser sentences (typically H, or none at all). Bargemen and Crimmor Guard members never receive sentences higher than H, whether or not on-duty when the slaying occurred.

The Lost Lady



Lady Zarnn Ophal

unable to get out. His bones and the gems have never been found, but her restless spirit persists as a floating, incorporeal, faintly-glowing face that whispers in the ears of persons she finds alone by night, bidding them "find Roloran" or "find my bluestones."

Esmaelae has the ability to enter into and "ride" beings (any intelligent creature of either gender) who are willing, or whom she "overcomes" (DC 20 Will Save to avoid; DC 24 if target drowsy or DC 30 if target asleep), forcing them to search Crimmor for Roloran.

She knows he's "shut away somewhere," and will compel her "steed" to keep moving and looking (steeds can otherwise speak and act freely, for example donning clothes or wielding items). Esmaelae's face will be faintly visible, superimposed over the features of the person she's riding. Magic, lots of loud people, or a successful Will save (one attempt every hour) usually causes her to "melt away" from ridden beings, leaving them their own masters again.

There's no known way to slay Esmaelae, she means no particular harm to those she whispers to or "rides" (although fearful victims have been slain or injured fleeing or doing wild things to try to be rid of her), and some Crimmans welcome her "aboard" in hopes she'll lead them to some treasure they can benefit from. All Crimmans know about the Lost Lady, and persons being ridden by her are generally tolerated or even followed and watched for sport.

current clack

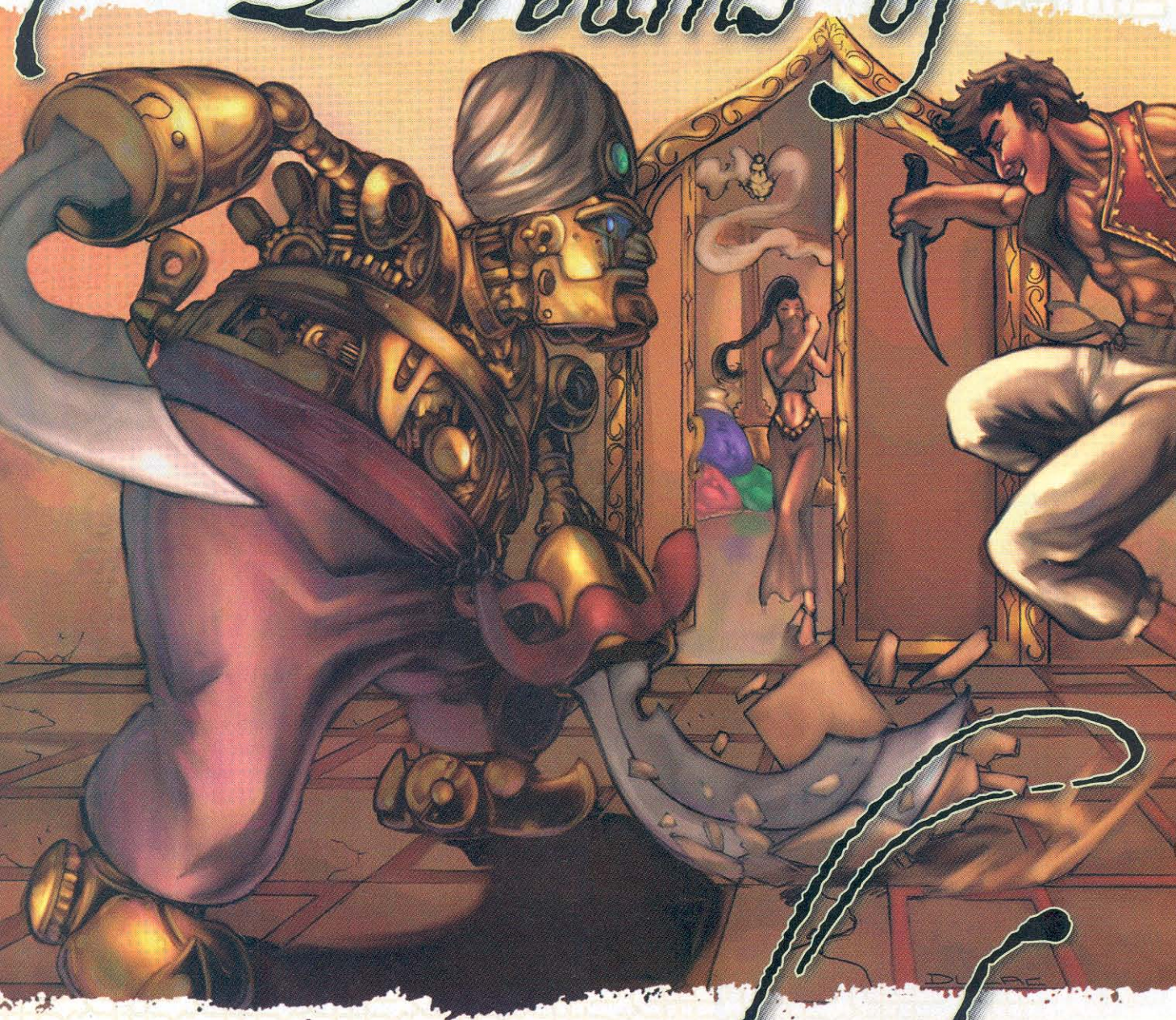
Crimmor is abuzz right now with the news that something like a flying eel that can apparently breathe air and water (and can travel the water pipes) has been stalking and slaying Thaeldorn officials. There are rumors that this is a creature unleashed by the icy-tempered Lady Ophal, a longtime foe of the current mayor often known as the Dragon Lady. Some whispers hint that she intends to slay Mayor Braen and every last city clerk, replacing them with courtiers and bureaucrats from Athkatla loyal to her. There are rumors that the Dragon Lady is opposed in this by the Shadow Thieves—but other rumors insist she's reached an agreement with them, that they're working with her, and that Lady Crytrapper has been warned not to help her cousin the mayor in any way.[19]

In recent years, several Red Wizards of Thay were found dead in the streets, publicly murdered, with "Thayans Stay Out" cut into the bodies. The Shadow Thieves were widely credited with these killings, but the grisly crimes did not deter Thayans from covertly entering the city and trying to trade, often through agents. Now, rings and potions of dark magic are said to be increasing in availability and are finding many buyers among ambitious Crimmans. Are these items safe to use, or can the Thayans control the unwitting purchasers through them? Are the Red Wizards assembling an unwitting army and preparing to strike against the mayor or take over the Thaeldorn? Wild rumors are flying!

19. Lady Zharnn Ophal is a CE human female rogue 7 fiercely dedicated to getting her own way in matters large and small. The Ophals control most of the trade in spices passing through Crimmor. Lady Lamia Crytrapper is a NG human female ranger 6.

Dreams of Arabia

Creatures from Antiquity



by Wolfgang Baur
illustrated by Chad Dulac and colors by Jim Zubkavich

The thousand and one tales of the *Arabian Nights* are filled with harems full of delicate dancing girls, rich caves laden with treasure, and dozens of monsters that have become staples of D&D: djinn, efreet, ghouls, jann, rocs, and more. Presented here are six more creatures, risen from the sands of antiquity, derived from and inspired by Akkadian, Arabian, Egyptian, and Persian myths, eager to mystify and mortify your PCs.

Asag

The desert outrider felt the earth move beneath him, the very stone shift, and heard pebbles skitter away down slope. He could barely keep his balance and almost fell over completely when he realized he stood on top of a dark earth demon, a three-armed creature of nightmares slowly tilting, forcing him to slide down into its outstretched claw.

Huge Outsider (Earth, Evil)
Hit Dice: 17d8+34 (110 hp)
Initiative: –2
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 30 ft.
Armor Class: 22 (–2 size, –2 Dex, +16 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 22
Base Attack/Grapple: +17/+33
Attack: Slam +23 melee (3d8+8 plus disease)
Full Attack: 2 slams +23 melee (3d8+8 plus disease)
Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: Disease, spell-like abilities, stunning fist, *summon xorn*
Special Qualities: Blindsense, camouflage, *plane shift*
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +10
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 6, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 14
Skills: Appraise +11, Bluff +22, Concentration +15, Hide +10*, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +20, Move Silently +18, Search +15, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +9, Spot +24
Feats: Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any land
Organization: Solitary, pair, or band (6–15)
Challenge Rating: 11
Treasure: Standard, double gems
Alignment: Often lawful evil
Advancement: 18–29 HD (Huge); 30–43 HD (Gargantuan)

At first, this creature looks like little more than an outcropping of earth and stone, but it soon begins to move on three broad legs, reaching out with a trio of stone arms. Dozens of stony alien eyes peer out from around its bulk.

Large as a small hill, round as a boulder, three-legged and three-armed, the asag are a race of elemental stone fiends. Many eyes cover their entire bulk and their dark, hardened skin resembles rock. Striations and inclusions, similar to stone, mark their skin and some of the elder asag even sport lichens and moss from their great age.

Banished from the Elemental Planes by powerful sorcerers, asags are driven by a hatred of humanoids, especially dwarves and gnomes. They can raise small armies of xorns from fields of rocks and stones. Some sages believe asags were once the masters of the Elemental Plane of Earth, and now wander the planes in search of vengeance.

Asags speak Common, Infernal, and Terran.

Combat

Asags are relatively clever fighters, usually attacking from ambush despite their size. They sit quietly, pretending to be small hillocks or large rocks, until their prey is close enough to grab and eat.

When facing multiple opponents, an asag first summons xorns to surround its enemies. Once opponents have engaged the xorns, the asag rises and attacks from an unexpected direction. Once an asag has revealed itself, it prefers to use its Awesome Blow feat to flatten opponents so that the summoned xorns can overrun them.

Disease (Su): Those struck by an asag's slam risk contracting a horrible dehydrating illness. Dry Death—slam, Fortitude DC 20, incubation period 1 day, damage 1d6 Con. Those who have taken Constitution damage from this

disease are considered dehydrated, regardless of the temperature or their intake of water, and must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10 +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Those who take nonlethal damage from this illness are fatigued. Getting in a cool environment or drinking lots of fluids does nothing to end this condition. This condition can only be removed by curing the disease. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic, endure elements;* 3/day—*stone shape, stoneskin;* 1/day—*major creation* (created mineral matter is permanent), *passwall.* Caster level 17th.

Stunning Fist (Ex): Whenever it rolls a natural 20 on a slam attack, an asag stuns its opponent for 1 round, regardless of whether the critical hit is confirmed or not. A DC 26 Fortitude save avoids this effect. The save DC is Strength-based.

***Summon Xorn* (Sp):** An asag can summon 1d4 minor xorns or 1 average xorn for 1 hour up to three times per day. This summoning requires a full-round action.

All-Around Vision (Ex): An asag's many eyes allow it to look in all directions at once, providing a +4 racial bonus on Search and Spot checks. An asag cannot be flanked.

Camouflage (Ex): Asags are able to blend in with any type of natural or worked stone, earth, sand, or clay. They gain a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks in such circumstances. An asag can hide in such environments without the need for cover or concealment.

***Plane Shift* (Sp):** An asag can *plane shift* (as per the spell) to any of the elemental planes (except earth), the Astral Plane, or the Material Plane. This ability transports the asag and up to six other creatures, provided they all link hands with the asag and are willing.

Clockwork Eunuch

Outside the harem door stand two devices that walk like men and wrestle like snakes. No one enters without answering to them, and they are beyond all bribes and flattery. Surely the sultan's harem is safe in their enormous metallic arms?

Medium Construct
Hit Dice: 5d10+20 (47 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Armor Class: 17 (+7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 17
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+15
Attack: Large scimitar +7 melee (1d8+4)
Full Attack: 2 Large scimitars +7 melee (1d8+4)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: *Discern lies*, grapple, *hold person*, oil
Special Qualities: Construct immunities, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision
Saving Throws: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 10, Con —, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7
Feats: Alertness, Skill Focus (Sense Motive)
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Solitary, pair, or patrol (3–12)
Challenge Rating: 4
Treasure: No coins, double jewels, standard items (decorations)
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement Range: 5–7 HD (Large)

This rotund figure is made entirely of brass, silver, and gold. Between his joints, oiled gears click and spin. His metal legs are fashioned to appear as if he is wearing baggy pants and a wide belt. Two glowing blue eyes shine forth from underneath a large brass turban. Instead of hands, he has only two large curving scimitars.

These clockwork creatures are not truly eunuchs, but often replace them as harem guards in the palaces of sultans, emirs, and princes. They are always built of the finest materials and are often inlaid with gold, silver, mother of pearl, and precious stones for their flashing eyes. Most wear a turban and baggy trousers, although these are purely decorative. Some are built with two faces, one on either side of their head, in order to watch in two directions down a passage or at a doorway.

Quicker and smarter than many constructs, clockwork eunuchs are wise enough to see through basic evasions and trickery. Their behavior is governed by their master's or maker's commands.

Tales of clockwork eunuchs' liaisons with harem girls are nothing more than scandalous rumor. The act is impossible.

Clockwork eunuchs speak Common.

Combat

Clockwork eunuchs are sensitive to gender, race, and direction. They can recognize as many as fifty unique individuals. This allows them to fight or detain intruders and yet show proper deference to the residents of a palace, harem, or bordello. They can filter out all male visitors from an area, passage, or doorway, while permitting female visitors to pass freely. Likewise, they can make exceptions for particular individuals whom they have been commanded to allow or deny entry.

***Discern Lies* (Su):** As a standard action, a clockwork eunuch can discern if a target within 30 feet is deliberately and knowingly speaking falsehoods. This functions as *discern lies* but is always active and can affect anyone within 30 feet of the clockwork eunuch. A successful DC 16 Will save renders a target immune to this ability for 1 hour, although the clockwork eunuch is aware of this fact. The save DC is Wisdom based.

Grapple (Ex): The long arms and dull backsides of their scimitar hands allow a clockwork eunuch to secure prisoners, runaway slaves, and harem girls without causing them any serious harm. For this reason, they gain a +8 racial bonus on all grapple checks.

***Hold Person* (Sp):** Once per day, a clockwork eunuch can cast *hold person* as a 4th-level caster. A DC 14 Will save negates this effect. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Oil (Ex): Once per day, a clockwork eunuch can release several

gallons of slippery oil from a hidden reservoir. This acts like the spell *grease* but it instead covers a 10-foot-diameter area centered on the clockwork eunuch. This oil remains effective for 1 hour before becoming a sticky mess that does not hinder movement. Those in the area must succeed at a DC 13 Reflex save or fall prone. Clockwork eunuchs are immune to this effect. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Creating a Clockwork Eunuch

The first clockwork eunuchs are believed to have been built at the order of a sultan who had been betrayed by human eunuchs and who believed that clockwork creatures could give him what human desire could not guarantee. Over the following decades the knowledge spread from one vizier to another, until most sultans and caliphs depended on them.

Clockwork eunuchs balance the skills of clockwork artisans, clerics, and genie-binding sorcerers. They depend on carefully set everwound springs, memory gears, and magical rune-powered animating gemstones that pulse with elemental power. They are almost always constructed in the form of a traditional eunuch, wearing a vest, baggy pantaloons, and sometimes an enormous turban. Assembling the body requires a DC 15 Craft (armorsmithing) check or a DC 15 Craft (locksmithing) check.

It requires an arcane caster of at least 7th level with the Craft Wondrous Item feat and a minimum of 2,000 gp to create a clockwork eunuch. The process requires 30 days and involves the use of pure copper, steel and brass gearing, lead counterweights, mithril balance springs, and at least one single large emerald or sapphire. In addition to the physical components, magical ingredients are required, including the spell *hold person*, *oil of slipperiness* (for the gears), and the dust of a destroyed mummy. These ingredients are difficult to find, and in some cases the expense might double the cost of the automaton if the creator cannot find or create his own supply.

CL 7th; Craft Construct (see page 303 of the *Monster Manual*), *discern lies*, *grease*, *hold person*, caster must be at least 7th level; Price 10,000 gp; Cost 6,000 gp + 320 XP.

Flying Monkey

At first, it was just one monkey. It scared away the doves and built a little home in the headman's eaves. The children loved it. Then it was a dozen monkeys, tearing at the children's hair and making them drop their sweets and bits of coconut. The children hated it, and oh how they cried. Now it is a hundred monkeys! They must be stopped, before they drive everyone out of the village!

Tiny Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 1d10 (5 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (clumsy)
Armor Class: 15 (+2 size, +3 Dex), touch 15, flat-footed 12
Base Attack/Grapple: +1/–9
Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d3–2) or dropped stone +6 ranged (1d4)
Full Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d3–2) or dropped stone +6 ranged (1d4)
Space/Reach: 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Drop stones, group snatch
Special Qualities: Low-light vision
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills: Balance +11, Climb +7, Hide +12, Listen +2, Spot +2
Feats: Weapon Finesse
Climate/Terrain: Warm hills and forests
Organization: Band (2–12), troop (4–24), or circus (6–60)
Challenge Rating: 1/3
Treasure: Quarter standard
Alignment: Often neutral
Advancement: 2–4 HD (Small), 5–10 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: —

Wearing a small red vest and fez, this tiny monkey has long feathery wings sprouting from its back and a cruel grin full of sharp teeth across its face.

Flying monkeys are a plague and a pest to farmers, villagers, and brewers throughout the river and jungle lands of the tropics. They enjoy gorging themselves on stolen bananas, mangoes, figs, oranges, cakes, sweet dates, and beer, while mocking their victims from the treetops. They have occasionally been tamed and taught to wear vests and fezzes, but usually they travel in nothing more than their fur, which varies from pale reddish-brown to golden yellow or pure white.

Flying monkeys migrate from one harvest to another, often over hundreds of miles. They are prey for large birds such as giant eagles and rocs.

Flying monkeys can speak to each other through a rudimentary language of cries and growls.

Combat

Flying monkeys avoid combat when able but defend their territory or retaliate if attacked. They prefer to fight from the air, dropping rocks and coconuts on their targets, and they often attack in groups.

Drop Stones (Ex): Flying monkeys like to fight by picking up small stones and dropping them on opponents from a great height (at least 20 feet above the target). This attack has a range increment of 60 feet and no maximum number of increments. Damage from a dropped object is not subject to the flying monkey's Strength penalty.

Group Snatch (Ex): A group of four or more flying monkeys can lift up and carry away a size Small creature, attacking as a group and using a single grapple check. Two are required for Tiny creatures, and eight for a Medium creature.

If the creature does not wish to be snatched into the air, an opposed grapple check is required. The flying monkeys gain a +2 on this grapple check for each flying monkey beyond the first participating in the attempt. If the monkeys succeed, the creature is grappled and forced to move along with the monkeys. If they fail, the creature stays on the ground.

Once a creature is airborne, it may chose to continue resisting, forcing a grapple check each round. This reduces the monkeys' flying speed by half. If successful, the creature falls from their grasp and takes falling damage normally.

Skills: Flying monkeys have a +8 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks. They can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. They use their Dexterity modifier instead of their Strength modifier for Climb checks.

Humbaba

Utterly silent, the bodies of twenty or more honorable dead rose up as one and struck the small boat amidships, smashing it in two. One man fell directly into the creature's chest and joined the bodies of the dead all around him.

Large Undead
Hit Dice: 26d12 (169 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), swim 20 ft.
Armor Class: 19 (+10 natural, –1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 19
Base Attack/Grapple: +13/+23
Attack: Slam +18 melee (2d12+6) or rock +12 ranged (2d6+6)
Full Attack: 2 slams +18 melee (2d12+7) or 4 rocks +10/+10/+5/+0 ranged (2d6+6)
Face/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Absorb weapon, endless arms, improved grab, melding touch, spell-like abilities, throw rocks
Special Qualities: Play dead, undead traits
Saving Throws: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +19
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 10, Con —, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12
Skills: Concentration +29, Disguise +30, Intimidate +30, Listen +31, Spellcraft +31, Spot +31
Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot
Climate/Terrain: Any warm
Organization: Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating: 15
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Usually lawful neutral
Advancement: 27 to 34 HD (Large), 35 to 42 (Huge)

Standing over twenty feet tall, this hulking, rotting man-shaped form is made of dozens of writhing dead bodies held together by some unseen force. Although firmly attached, their limbs move independently, dumbly reaching and grasping for freedom.

Humbabas are 20-foot-tall undead giants constructed out of dozens of smaller bodies and set to guard the border between the lands of the living and the lands of the dead, such as the River Styx. They are composite creatures controlled by a single powerful will.

Most humbabas guard sacred places such as the Forest of Cedars, an abode of the gods, or the many necropolises where the bodies of heroes lie buried in splendor. They are not evil, but they are relentless in their defense of certain tombs and borderlands. Some believe that they were first created by the gods of the afterlife.

Humbabas speak Celestial, Common, and Infernal.

Combat

A humbaba does not fight unless its territory is entered or threatened, and it typically avoids attacking clerics of the deities of death. Humbabas seek to intimidate others into leaving the areas they protect. Some of them talk rather than fight, and do so with a strange buzzing voice that comes from several rotted throats at once.

incurable penchant for impulsive trouble making
pointless faux viking hat
cute but vague expression
banana half-full attitude
prehensile tail for gripping swords & branches
un-ending appetite
Code Monkey Erases (I'm pending)
big flexible feet for fireball flinging
Anatomy of a Code Monkey

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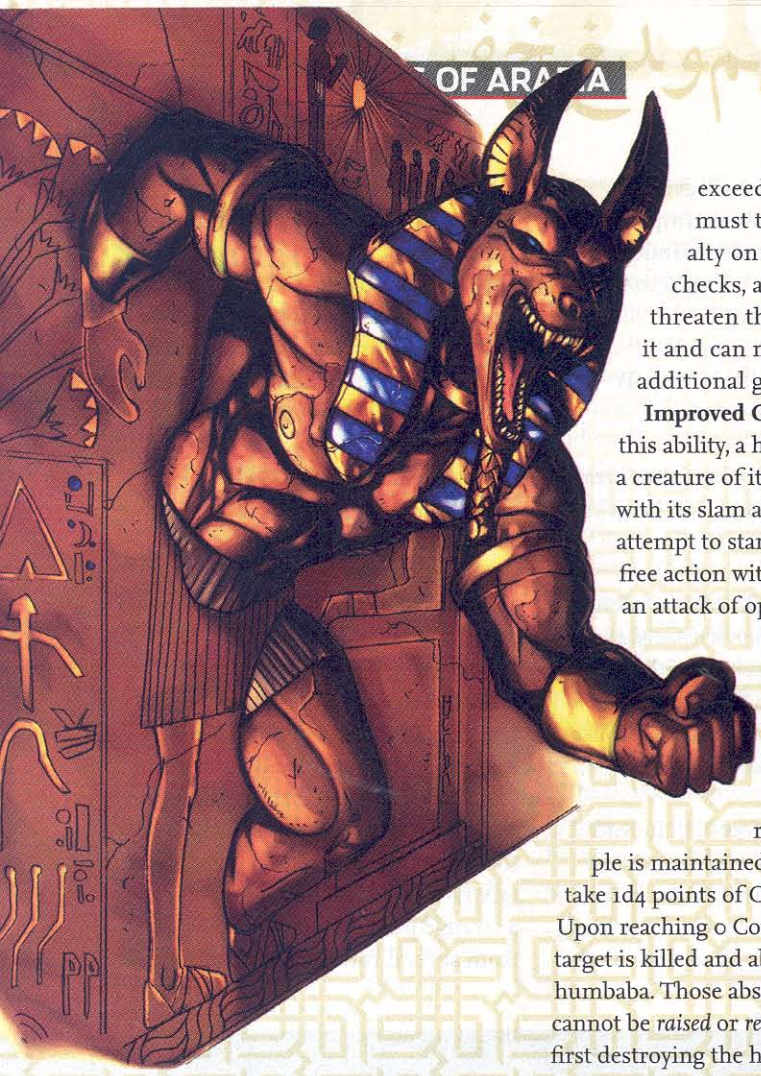


Once attacked or threatened, a humbaba first throws rocks from a distance. Just before reaching melee range, it casts *enervation* and then uses its melding touch to destroy opponents as quickly as possible.

If overmatched, a humbaba attempts to play dead.

Absorb Weapons (Ex): A humbaba can attempt to absorb any melee weapon that strikes it by succeeding at an opposed Strength check. If the check succeeds, one of the humbaba's constituent creatures drags the weapon away from its wielder. Any weapon stolen in this manner is not destroyed and can be taken back from the humbaba with a successful disarm attempt or upon the humbaba's death. Weapons taken are held and not used.

Endless Arms (Ex): A humbaba can grapple up to one Large, two Medium, or four Small or smaller creatures while still making its normal attacks and threatening the area around it. Once these limits are exceeded, a humbaba must take a –20 penalty on all of its grapple checks, as normal, to threaten the area around it and can no longer make additional grapple attempts.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a humbaba must hit a creature of its size or smaller with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Melding Touch (Su): A humbaba can absorb living creatures into itself. At the end of each round that a grapple is maintained, those grappled take 1d4 points of Constitution drain. Upon reaching 0 Constitution, the target is killed and absorbed into the humbaba. Those absorbed in this way cannot be *raised* or *resurrected* without first destroying the humbaba.

A humbaba advances in Hit Dice by absorbing creatures in this manner. For every 12 Hit Dice absorbed, the humbaba gains 1 Hit Die. If this increases its size, the humbaba gains a +8 bonus to Strength and a +4 bonus to its natural armor.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): At will—*enervation*; 3/day—*circle of death* (DC 18), *control undead* (DC 19), *crushing despair* (DC 16); 1/day—*repulsion* (DC 19), *slay living* (DC 17), *soul bind* (DC 21). Caster level 20th. The save DCs are Wisdom-based.

Rock Throwing (Ex): A humbaba can throw large rocks with a range increment of 100 feet. These rocks can be thrown a maximum of five range increments.

Play Dead (Ex): A humbaba reduced to fewer than 10% of its starting hit points may deliberately discorporate as a free action, falling apart into its constituent bodies and acting as if destroyed. This deception can be noticed with a Spot check opposed by the humbaba's Disguise check. The parts can rejoin one another as a full-round action. While discorporated, the humbaba is immune to turning and only half the damage done to any part is subtracted from the humbaba's hit point total.

Relief Golem

The carvings along either wall showed the caliph's burial procession, full of his grieving wives, mounted harriers, servants bearing falcons, and a long string of beautiful slave girls. Just past a gaggle of mullahs and scholars, the wall suddenly shivered, and from the dust stepped four flat creatures of stone and bright paint. They carried heavy stone scrolls in their hands—scrolls the size and weight of sledgehammers.

Large Construct
Hit Dice: 18d10+30 (129 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class: 23 (+14 natural, –1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 23
Base Attack/Grapple: +13/+23
Attack: Slam +18 melee (2d8+6/19–20)
Full Attack: 2 slams +18 melee (2d8+6/19–20)
Face/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Surprise
Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 10/piercing or bludgeoning, immunity to magic, *meld with stone, phase door*
Saving Throws: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +7
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 10, Con —, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 1
Skills: Hide +6*, Move Silently +11
Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating: 9
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always Neutral
Advancement Range: 19–27 HD (Huge)

A wall-carving come to life, this creature is made of light tan stone and has features similar to that of a man blended with a jackal. A strange look of menace seems eternally etched across its face.

A relief golem is a flat creature that resembles a bas-relief or frieze carved into a wall, often painted or gilded and decorated to resemble a saint, high priest, holy figure, tomb guardian, or mythological animal. However, it can leave the wall at will to defend an area or destroy intruders. Because of its unusual construction, it almost always achieves surprise against opponents.

A relief golem often walks through walls as part of its patrol routes; this tends to leave footprints that seem to vanish directly into a wall. Many parties mistake this for a sign that a secret door is nearby and are surprised when the relief golem finds them searching the walls.

Combat

Relief golems attack by surprise against the nearest foe that meets the requirements set by their maker. When possible, a pair of relief golems flanks a foe caught between them in a hallway.

Surprise (Ex): A relief golem melded with the wall receives a +20 circumstance bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks the round after exiting, often allowing them to surprise intruders.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A relief golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *stone to flesh* spell cast on a relief golem prevents it from using its *meld with stone* and *phase door* ability and negates its damage reduction for 1 hour with no saving throw. A *soften earth and stone* cast upon a relief golem slows it (as per the spell *slow*) for 2d4 rounds with no saving throw. Casting *transmute mud to rock* on a relief golem heals it of all its lost hit points.

***Meld with Stone* (Sp):** A relief golem can enter a stone surface at will as a standard action as per the spell *meld with stone*. While inside the wall, any carvings or paintings on the wall shift and alter to accommodate the image of the relief golem that appears where it has merged. A relief golem can see and hear out of the stone surface that it is melded with. This effect lasts until the relief golem decides to exit the stone. The caster level for this effect is equal to the relief golem's Hit Dice. Casting *stone shape* on a wall containing a relief golem forces it to leave immediately.

***Phase Door* (Sp):** A relief golem can walk through wood, plaster, and stone walls at will as per the spell *phase door* as a standard action. Such portals can only be used once and the relief golem cannot take other creatures through. The caster level for this effect is equal to the relief golem's Hit Dice.

Skills: A relief golem receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks made in an area of stone, earth, or sand.

Creating a Relief Golem

Relief golems are usually made by clerics to guard a holy site or tomb. The cost to create a relief golem is only partly reflected in the cost of finding and carving high-quality stone such as granite, limestone, marble, or basalt; the greater cost is the expense of the materials and spell components used to strengthen and animate the stone. A golem's body includes costly material components that require some extra preparation. The golem's creator can carve the body personally or hire someone else to do the job. The builder must have skill in sculpting relief carvings and stonework.

The golem must be carved from a 3,000-pound block of limestone or better-quality stone, then painted with blessed pigments of lapis lazuli, cinnabar, lime, and kohl, and finally gilded—a complete process that costs 5,000 gp. This carving can be done while the relief golem is still attached to the wall it will eventually guard. Assembling the body requires a DC 18 Craft (stonemasonry) check or a DC 18 Craft (sculpting) check. Various other precious alchemical substances are required to treat and harden the stone.

CL 12th; Craft Construct (see page 303 of the *Monster Manual*), *meld into stone, phase door, stone shape,* caster must be at least 12th level; Price 40,000 gp; Cost 22,500 gp + 1,400 XP.

Simurgh

Like a second sun, the golden simurgh sailed through the sky, trails of golden sunlight falling from its wings. Behind it, a court of ten thousand birds flew in its wake, each of them calling and cawing to the King of Birds.

Large Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 10d10+20 (75 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 50 ft. (clumsy)
Armor Class: 17 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+15
Attack: Wing buffet +10 melee (2d8+1)
Full Attack: 2 wing buffets +10 melee (2d8+1) and bite +8 melee (1d4+1)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Peacock's tail, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: All worldly lore, darkvision 60 ft., *plane shift*
Saving Throws: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +8
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 20, Cha 14
Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (geography) +18, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (local) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Listen +11, Spot +12
Feats: Ability Focus (peacock's tail), Combat Casting, Multiattack, Wingover
Climate/Terrain: Warm hills or mountains
Organization: Solitary or pair and offspring (2–5)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: Half standard
Alignment: Always lawful good
Advancement Range: 7–12 HD (Large), 13–18 HD (Huge)

Similar to a giant peacock, this creature possesses the claws of a lion, shimmering tail feathers, and the head of a human. Four golden wings sprout from its back, gently folded to its body. An aura of peace and serenity surrounds it.

A simurgh is a rare species of gigantic peacock with a human head, lion's claws, and two pairs of golden wings sprouting from its back. Their wings are covered with metallic orange scales, and their fantastic peacock tail shimmers with light and magic. They are frequently called the Kings of Birds.

A simurgh's ancient wisdom makes it a frequent object of quests. It is said that simurghs are so old that they have seen the world destroyed three times—by fiery sandstorms, by endless water, and by earthquakes—and have survived each time. They are known to aid and protect other lawful good beings, but they avoid physical combat when they can.

Their great age and endless curiosity gives them the wisdom of the ages, but they hate fools and foolish questions. Those who find a simurgh and tell it something it does not already know are allegedly allowed to ask three questions of the King of Birds. Those who find a simurgh and know nothing new, original, or wise are often made its next meal, for simurghs are ravenous carnivores. Their usual diet is fish, insects, and small mammals, but they make exceptions for fools. Simurghs always live near water; they abhor deserts and dry hills.

Other birds, such as giant eagles, condors, falcons, or even rocs, help guard a simurgh raising its young. When not mating, a simurgh often maintains a "court" of other birds, from swallows to vultures.

Simurghs speak the languages of all birds, Auran, and Common.

Combat

A simurgh disdains combat whenever possible, preferring to fly away unless it has been physically assaulted, magically attacked, or seriously provoked, such as through blasphemy, oath-breaking, forgery, or the like. In that case, it flies above its foes and uses its hypnotic tail to slow down some foes while it prepares a *lightning bolt* or *searing light* to destroy those who have attacked it.

It never fights on the ground if it can be avoided, but strikes with razor-sharp wing buffets if cornered or pressed.

Peacock's Tail (Sp): As a standard action a simurgh can spread its peacock-like tail to hypnotize its foes. This acts as the spell *hypnotic pattern* as if cast by a 10th-level caster and lasts for as long as the simurgh keeps shimmering its tail and for 1d4+1 rounds thereafter. A successful DC 22 Will save avoids the effect. The save DC is Wisdom-based.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): At will—*detect chaos, detect evil, light, polymorph* (self only; Small bird or human form only), *see invisibility, speak with animals, tongues*; 3/day—*create food and water, searing light*; 1/day—*lightning bolt* (DC 18), *persistent image* (DC 20), *true seeing*. Caster level 10th. The save DCs are Wisdom-based.

All Worldly Lore (Ex): A simurgh's great age and wisdom allow it to discern the magical properties of any object at will (as the spell *identify*), and grants it a +7 racial bonus on all Knowledge checks.

***Plane Shift* (Sp):** A simurgh can transport itself and up to seven other willing creatures to any of the elemental planes, the Astral Plane, or the Material Plane. All of the creatures to be affected must link hands and touch the simurgh's tail. It is otherwise similar to the spell *plane shift*.

Simurgh Tail Feathers

Simurghs are frequently pursued for their plumage, especially by bands of humans. If their tail feathers are freely given, they dazzle like a piece of the sun and radiate *daylight* in a 30-foot radius (as per the spell). If taken from a dead simurgh, the feathers lose their brilliance at the next dawn.

A simurgh feather can be used to make a *robe of scintillating colors*, reducing the cost to create it by 1,000 gp per feather used. If a simurgh feather is used to scribe a scroll of *color spray, hypnotic pattern, rainbow pattern, prismatic sphere, prismatic spray*, or *prismatic wall*, the caster need not pay any XP cost associated with that item's creation.

The tail feathers of a simurgh often fetch 1,000 gp if sold to an arcane caster, collector, or scribe.

by Paul Leach • illustrated by Andrew Hou

The Fires of Alchemy

Alchemist's Fire Explored

Jets of liquid fire spew from the draconic maw, splashing across the deck, rigging, and crew of the barbarian ship. The hiss and roar of flames fills the air—along with shrieks of pain—as the burnt and terrorized men try to douse the hellish spittle by jumping into the sea. Thick, oily smoke stings the eyes and obscures the nightmarish suffering, but the cries of the wretched cannot be silenced and the horrible smell cannot be overcome.

This scene is derived from the accounts of clashes between the Byzantine navy and flotillas of Russian raiders on the Black Sea in the 10th century. Several imperial Byzantine ships were equipped with stylized metal tubes (molded to appear as dragons or other fantastic creatures) capable of squirting streams of sticky, flaming oil—Greek fire. This medieval forerunner of napalm was responsible for devastating enemy ships time and again.

Greek fire currently exists in the D&D game as flasks of alchemist's fire, but a world of magic and dragons might have a greater variety of incendiaries. This article reviews the real-world history of this terrible weapon and offers rules and suggestions on how to incorporate it into any campaign.

A Short History of Greek Fire

Incendiary weapons had been used in warfare for more than a thousand years before the Byzantine period of the East Roman Empire, but the use of these volatile weapons was perhaps the most notorious during this period. It could be sprayed, much like the flamethrowers of the 20th century, and it could also be stored in assorted containers and hurled by hand, staff sling, or catapult. The appellation "Greek fire" actually refers to several different volatile mixtures that evolved between the 7th and 12th centuries in the Middle East, and is not really restricted to those employed by the Byzantine Empire. Other names include wet fire, artificial fire, and molten fire. Kallinikos, a Syrian architect, is credited with creating the original formula around 673 CE.

Although recipes varied, each explosive concoction usually included one or more of the following: naptha, pitch, quicklime, or saltpeter. Naptha, a petroleum derivative (used in gasoline today), was an essential element, as it is both liquid and flammable. Pitch provided a nasty adhesive quality to the oil, while saltpeter might have caused some compounds to abruptly combust. The mixtures that included quicklime burst into flames upon contact with water, making them major assets in any naval conflict.

In fact, the Byzantines knew Greek fire as sea fire for this very reason and considered these formulas to be state secrets.

Greek fire was employed in naval and siege warfare but was rarely used on open battlefields. Tactical factors prevented the weapon from surviving the ebb and flow of a land conflict. For example, to deliver significant quantities of the deadly liquid, bulky slow-moving equipment such as a siphon projector or catapult was needed. Grenadiers armed with flasks needed to engage their targets at relatively close range and suffered in mobility if they carried a large supply of ammunition. Bulky siege artillery and awkward pottery missiles rarely belonged in the battles of Eastern Europe, which often involved highly mobile cavalry forces.

The Byzantine navy equipped special ships, called *siphonophores*, with the pumps and projector tubes required to spray wet fire. Based on contemporary historical texts and illustrations, projector tubes were mounted on the prows of *siphonophores* atop raised decks or platforms so they could discharge the burning liquid down onto enemy boats. Some metal tube projectors spewed fire that was forced from bellows, while smaller projectors were actually syringe devices. All other ships in the Byzantine navy were supposed to carry pots of Greek fire and other incendiaries for throwing or catapulting at enemy ships. Whenever possible, imperial fleets attempted to surround enemy formations, sheering their oars and setting their boats and the sea around them on fire.

A Short History of Incendiaries in D&D

Adventurers and their adversaries have been using incendiaries throughout the entire history of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. While a red dragon's breath, a wizard's *fireball*, and blazing dungeon traps are the epitome of this dangerous element in the game, there have been some mundane and not-so mundane real-world examples of Greek fire sprinkled into play. In first edition AD&D, characters hurled flaming oil flasks at enemies, but by second edition, PCs could actually purchase flasks of Greek fire (despite the fact that neither GREYHAWK nor the FORGOTTEN REALMS included Greece), which was stickier and nastier than regular oil. By third edition, Greek fire became alchemist's fire, and it exploded upon contact with air. A cart-mounted siphon projector appeared in the first edition module *A1: Slave Pits of the Undercity*. While the flame-throwing cart might have seemed like a fantastic item for the technology level of the game, real world examples indicated otherwise.

Alchemist's Fire and Dungeon Delving

While characters might use (or be targeted by) siphon projectors or firebombing catapults on a ship or castle tower, more often they find themselves engaged in some underground tunnel exchanging volleys of alchemist's fire amidst the chaos of close quarters combat.

Alchemist's fire is a great weapon, both for player characters and their foes, especially at lower levels of play. It takes no skill to use, only requires a successful ranged touch attack to score a direct hit, and is an expedient substitute for spells such as *burning hands*, *flaming sphere*, and *pyrotechnics*. A direct hit can be devastating even to a tough fighter or burly creature. Even splash damage is enough to threaten creatures that have fewer than 10 hit points.

Many of the natural (and not so natural) inhabitants of dungeon environments loathe fire, and it is often best to use flaming missiles instead of touching some of these horrors if at all possible. Creatures of the ooze, plant, vermin, and undead types rarely have good Reflex saving throws, making it very hard for the target of a direct hit to extinguish the flames. Spiders and centipedes, with their good Dexterity scores, do not fall victim as easily as other vermin, but fire attacks are still superb weapons to use against them. Swarms are especially vulnerable to alchemist's fire, taking half again as much damage from area-affect spells and splash weapons. Even at higher levels of play, characters might find it better to use this simple weapon instead of wasting powerful spells on what might be considered tricky nuisance monsters.

New Equipment and Magic Items

Following are new alchemical substances, siege artillery, and magic items inspired by Greek fire and its numerous variants.

Special Substance	Cost	Craft (alchemy) DC	Weight
Alchemist's fire bullet	20 gp	20	1/2 lb.
Burning dust	40 gp	25	1 lb.
Long-burning alchemist's fire	30 gp	25	1 lb.
Wet fire	25 gp	20	1 lb.

New Special Substances

These items are alchemical in nature and each requires ranks in Craft (alchemy) to create.

Alchemist's Fire Bullet: This small glass sphere contains alchemist's fire and can be used as a sling missile. When it strikes a target, a flame bullet shatters, dealing 1d4 points of fire damage in addition to the normal damage from the sling bullet. The target takes an additional 1d4 points of fire damage on the following round unless the fire is extinguished, as with normal alchemist's fire. These bullets are larger than normal, imposing a –2 penalty on attack rolls made using them.

Burning Dust: Stored in small ceramic containers, this white or ashen dust hampers vision and breathing. This grenade can be thrown at a 5-foot square (AC 5). Any creature within 5 feet of the target square must make a successful DC 12 Fortitude saving throw or be blinded and sickened for 1d6 rounds. Creatures with any resistance to fire or immunity to critical hits are unaffected by burning dust.

Long-Burning Alchemist's Fire: This substance has all the standard qualities of alchemist's fire except that it burns for 2 additional rounds after a direct hit instead of 1. The DC to extinguish long-burning alchemist's fire is 17.

Wet Fire: Adding quicklime to a regular pint of oil turns it into a special substance, similar to alchemist's fire but ignited by exposure to water or fire instead of air. Burning wet fire deals fire damage exactly as alchemist's fire, but it is more difficult to extinguish. Immersion in a body of water does not automatically quell the flames, but the action provides a +2 circumstance bonus on the Reflex save to extinguish the fire. Wet fire grenades contain two chambers, one filled with wet fire, the other with water to get the fire started.

New Siege Engines and Ammunition

These new siege engines and siege ammunition each use alchemists fire (or one of the new variants) to devastating effect. Additional siege engines can be found on page 99 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and in the vehicles chapter of the *Arms and Equipment Guide*.

Burning Dust Pot: This missile shatters upon impact covering a 20-foot-radius burst in burning dust (as noted earlier). This ammunition is for heavy catapults only. It is fired just like a normal catapult missile (see page 99 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

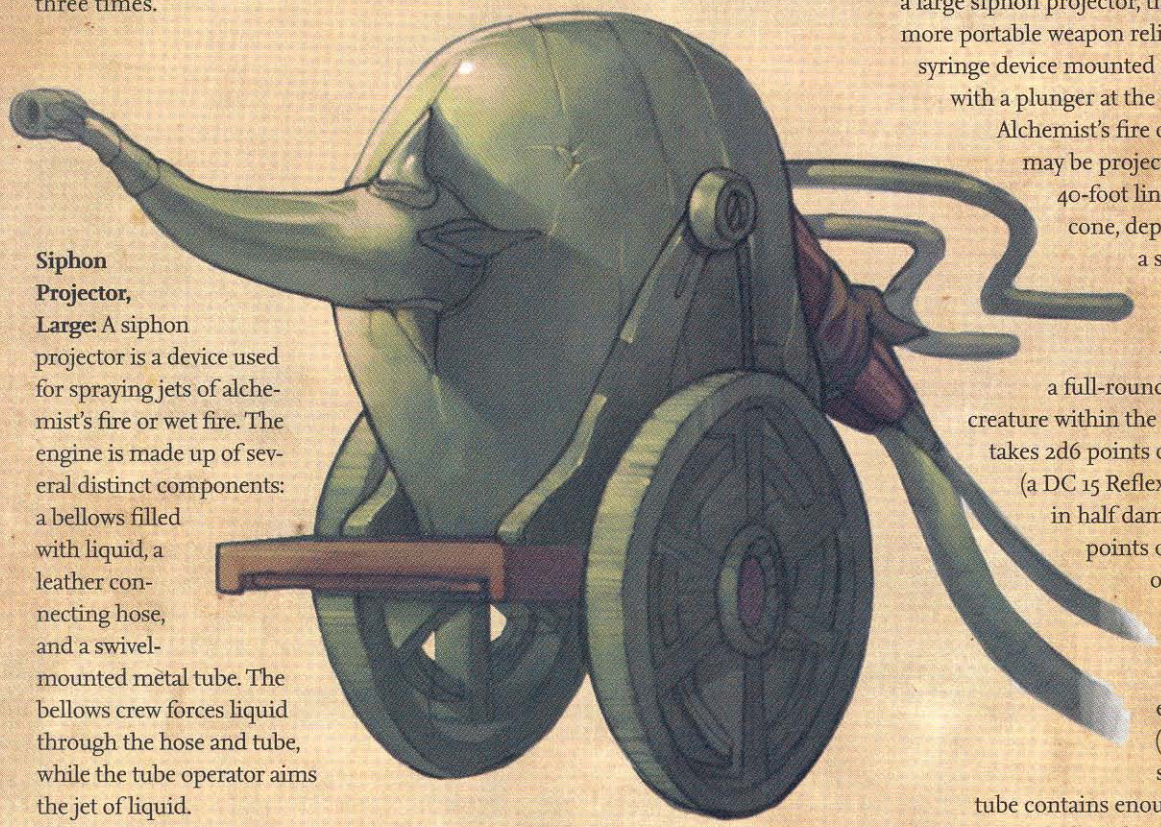
Fire Pot: This is a large ceramic container filled with alchemist's fire and sealed with a metal cap. It explodes upon impact, forcing all creatures within a 20-foot-radius burst to take 4d6 points of fire damage. A successful DC 15 Reflex save halves this damage. All affected creatures take 2d6 points of damage the following round unless the fire is extinguished (as per normal alchemist's fire). This ammunition is for heavy catapults only. It is fired just like a normal catapult missile (see page 99 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Long-Burning Fire Pot: This missile is treated the same as the normal fire pot except that the fire burns for an additional round unless extinguished, dealing another 2d6 points of fire damage. This ammunition is for heavy catapults only. It is fired just like a normal catapult missile (see page 99 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Siphon Fire: Similar to the alchemist's fire found in the *Player's*

Siege Engines and Ammunition	Cost	Craft (alchemy) DC	Weight
Burning dust pot	100 gp	25	15 lb.
Fire pot	100 gp	20	20 lb.
Long-burning fire pot	150 gp	25	20 lb.
Siphon fire	100 gp	20	30 lb.
Siphon projector, large	1,500 gp	—	500 lb.
Siphon projector, small	1,000 gp	—	200 lb.
Siphon wet fire	125 gp	20	30 lb.

Handbook, this oil has been formulated to be used in a siphon projector. One barrel of this flammable liquid is enough to fill one large siphon projector once or a small siphon projector three times.



Siphon Projector, Large: A siphon projector is a device used for spraying jets of alchemist's fire or wet fire. The engine is made up of several distinct components: a bellows filled with liquid, a leather connecting hose, and a swivel-mounted metal tube. The bellows crew forces liquid through the hose and tube, while the tube operator aims the jet of liquid.

Alchemist's fire or wet fire may be projected in either a 60-foot line or a 30-foot cone depending upon a setting near the nozzle. Changing the setting is a full-round action. Any creature within the cone or line takes 4d6 points of fire damage (a DC 15 Reflex save results in half damage), and 2d6 points of fire damage on the following round unless the fire is extinguished (DC 15 Reflex save). A full bellows contains enough liquid for six uses. Refueling the weapon takes 3 rounds. When spraying wet fire, water is added to the mixture just before it is expelled, ensuring ignition.

The siphon projector is very combustible. Whenever a siphon projector is subject to fire damage, it must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + fire damage dealt, save bonus +5) or explode. A siphon projector that explodes deals 2d6 points of fire damage per use of liquid that remains inside to every target in a 20-foot-radius burst. A successful DC 15 Reflex save halves this damage.

A large siphon projector takes up a space 10 feet by 10 feet and is usually stationary. Typically moved by a pair of heavy horses, setting up a large siphon projector after it has been moved takes 1 minute.

Siphon Projector, Small: Similar to a large siphon projector, this smaller, more portable weapon relies upon a syringe device mounted atop a cart with a plunger at the rear. Alchemist's fire or wet fire may be projected in either a 40-foot line or a 20-foot cone, depending upon a setting near the nozzle. Changing the setting is a full-round action. Any creature within the cone or line takes 2d6 points of fire damage (a DC 15 Reflex save results in half damage), and 1d6 points of fire damage on the following round unless the fire is extinguished (DC 15 Reflex save). A full tube contains enough liquid for three uses. Refueling the weapon is a full-round action. When spraying wet fire, water is added to the mixture just before it is expelled, ensuring ignition.

The small siphon projector is not as vulnerable to fire damage as the large projector. A fire attack might destroy a siphon tube, but it results in only a small explosion, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage to all within a 10-foot burst (DC 13 Reflex save for half damage).

A small siphon projector takes up a space 5 feet by 5 feet and is usually

stationary. Typically moved by a crew of two or a single heavy horse, setting up a small siphon projector after it has been moved takes 5 rounds.

Siphon Wet Fire: Similar to the wet fire presented earlier in this article, this flammable oil is specially prepared for use in a siphon projector. One barrel of this flammable liquid is enough to fill one large siphon projector once or a small siphon projector three times.

New Magic Items

These wondrous items are magically altered versions of alchemist's fire. The flasks of volatile substances are treated exactly as alchemist's fire, except where noted otherwise. Also note that the creators of these wondrous incendiaries cannot simply purchase flasks of alchemist's fire and treat them with the appropriate skills and spells. The alchemist's fire must be infused with magical properties during the manufacturing process, as opening a flask to cast spells on the liquid usually destroys the item.

Flask of Amorphous Fire: This concoction produces an effect similar to a *flaming sphere*. When thrown, a *flask of amorphous fire* burns for 3 rounds, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage per round to any creature subject to a direct hit. Those adjacent to the direct hit take 1 point of fire damage from the splash. This fire can be extinguished in a manner similar to alchemist's fire, requiring a successful DC 18 Reflex save. A *flask of amorphous fire* that misses creates a pool of fire in the square of impact that deals 2d6 points of fire damage to any creature passing through it. A successful DC 18 Reflex save halves this damage.

Faint evocation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *flaming sphere*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Craft (alchemy) skill; Price 500 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Flask of Silken Fire: This insidious substance mixes alchemist's fire with the *web* spell. Upon impact, a *flask of silken fire* immediately explodes in a large weblike pattern, splattering the area in burning sticky goo. This substance covers a 20-foot-radius burst from the point of impact. Any creature caught in the area of effect takes 2d4 points of fire damage. A successful DC 13 Reflex save halves this damage. In addition, the entire area is considered difficult terrain for 1 round, after which the webbing burns away.

Faint conjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *web*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Craft (alchemy) skill; Price 500 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Flask of Smoke Fire: A *flask of smoke fire* produces a cloud of burning black smoke. Targets that suffer a direct hit take 1d6 points of fire damage. Those adjacent to a direct hit take 1 point of fire damage from the splash. Upon impact, a *flask of smoke fire* creates a 20-foot-radius cloud of choking black smoke that lasts 3 rounds. Those inside the cloud take –4 penalties to Strength and Dexterity (DC 13 Fortitude save negates). These penalties last for 1d4+1 rounds after the cloud dissipates or after the creature leaves the area of the cloud. All sight, even darkvision, is ineffective in or through the cloud.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *pyrotechnics*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Craft (alchemy) skill; Price 500 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Flask of Thunderous Fire: A *flask of thunderous fire* mixes the properties of alchemist's fire with the deafening roar of a *sound burst*. Targets that suffer a direct hit take 1d6 points of fire damage. Those adjacent to a direct hit take 1 point of fire damage from the splash. An exploding flask deals 1d8 points of sonic damage to all creatures within a 10-foot radius. Exposed creatures must also make a successful DC 13 Fortitude saving throw to avoid being stunned for 1 round.

Faint evocation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *sound burst*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Craft (alchemy) skill; Price 500 gp; Weight 1 lb.

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Drunkards & Flagons

Fantasy's Deadliest Spirits

Since the origin of the genre, alcohol has always played a large (yet often overlooked) role in stories of heroic fantasy. How many groups of intrepid adventurers came together due, in large part, to the bonds forged between would-be heroes who just happen to meet in a bar? How many adventures begin with the approach of a mysterious individual while the PCs enjoy a mug of ale at the local tavern? These two old standbys of gaming myth were not created purely by chance. The tavern is a place for PCs to exchange gossip with locals, gather information, tell tales of their exploits, divide their spoils, toast their conquests, and drown their failures. It is a safe place for adventurers to take a break from their hectic lives and down a pint or two.

Often, when the heroes belly-up to the bar for a well-earned drink, the bartender's wide variety of beverages consists of little more than ale, wine, and water. Ordering up a pint of drowned man stout and a shot of firebelly goes a long way to creating a rich environment, one that your players are sure to remember a lot more than the mug of ale they can get in any other campaign.

ANCIENT HISTORY

The history of human civilization is deeply intertwined with the production of alcohol. Words like sake, pulque, wine, kumis, samshu, ale, sahti, sikim, and suk dot the cultural history of the human race like road markers. Almost every culture, irrespective of geographic location, developed some form of fermented beverage. The oldest of all alcoholic beverages is undoubtedly beer. Archaeologists postulate that the first beer resulted from fermentation that occurred in improperly stored bread. Excavations of sites dating back to at least 10,000 BCE found evidence of domesticated grains that prehistoric man might have used to make beer.

The earliest historical evidence of brewing comes from the kingdom of Sumeria in 3400 BCE. The Sumerians considered beer to be not only a refreshing beverage but also a vital source of nutrients. Beers of this time were cloudy and had to be drunk through a straw due to the inability of ancient brewers to remove grain husks. Tablets recovered from Sumerian temple sites show that beer played a vital role in religious ceremonies and funerary rights. The Sumerian pantheon even boasted a goddess of beer named Ninkasi. Tablets recovered from temples dedicated to the worship of Ninkasi contain prayers that detail brewing instructions.

Through trade and conquest the knowledge of brewing spread to other ancient civilizations.

Babylonia, Mesopotamia, and Egypt also possessed knowledge of brewing techniques. The ancient Egyptians ascribed medicinal qualities to beer, using it to heal aches and pains and to ward off sickness. Their texts describe more than twenty varieties with titles such as "Iron Beer," "Friend's Beer," and "The Beer of the Protector." Although the Egyptians used beer in rituals and as funerary offerings, they also used it as a form of currency. The salaries of many Egyptian laborers were paid with loaves of bread and jugs of beer. The Egyptians did not consider drunkenness to be harmful to society. In fact, overindulgence was considered to be an integral part of many banquets and religious festivals. Wall paintings found at the Necropolis at Ben-Hasan attest to this fact, depicting scenes of Egyptian men being carried home after a banquet as well as slaves caring for their inebriated masters and mistresses.

Contact with the Egyptians spread the knowledge of beer to Greece and Rome, where it was considered to be an integral part of daily life. Although by and large wine was considered by both societies to be the drink of the elite,

it is evident that beer was an important staple of the lower classes. Beer's importance in Early Roman society is proven by coins minted in the 6th century that depict crossed sheaves of barley. In later Roman times, however, beer became associated with barbarism as the Germanic peoples on the periphery of the Empire brewed it. Consequently, wine replaced beer as the drink of the new republic.

BEER IN THE MIDDLE AGES

After the fall of Rome, during the Dark Ages, brewing was practiced throughout Europe, Central Asia, and Northern Africa. Until the High Middle Ages the brewing of beer was considered to be a domestic chore and thus performed mainly by women. The term "brewster" (referring to a female brewer) actually preceded the masculine title by several hundred years. About this time, under the reign of Charlemagne, the first large-scale brewing operations began in Christian monasteries, which often boasted several breweries within just one building. By adding gruit (a predecessor of hops) to the ale monks found that they could produce different tastes, colors, and textures. Ale consumption was widespread in medieval Europe where, due to the unsanitary conditions in many villages and towns, ale was actually considered safer than water. During the later Middle Ages the practice of brewing became so widespread that it was regulated by guilds that controlled not only the breweries but also most taverns as well.

BEER AND BREWING

Beer is produced by the fermentation of starches from grains or other plants. The exact ingredients used to brew beer vary depending on the time period and place it is being brewed. The most common ingredient in beer is barley, although oats, corn, heather, rice, and even bananas are used by different cultures. The ingredients are mixed with heated water to form mash and left to ferment. The resulting mixture is then strained, boiled, and combined with various other ingredients such as hops, herbs, or spices. Finally, yeast is added and the beer is left to finish the fermenting process.

Modern beer comes in many different varieties, the two most common being ale and lager. Although

both of these beers contain similar ingredients, their differences can be attributed to the type of yeast used in their creation and the temperature at which they are brewed. Ale comes from the use of top-fermenting yeast that ferments at room temperature and diffuses through the brew to produce a darker beer. Lager, on the other hand, uses bottom-fermenting yeast that ferments at colder temperatures and does not diffuse through the mixture. This provides lager with a lighter golden color. Variations on these two themes are many, but ale and lager retain their popularity even today.

THE ORIGINS OF LIQUOR

Unlike the history of brewing, the origins of distillation are hazy at best. Many ancient societies practiced the art of distillation, although not all of them applied the knowledge to the production of alcohol. The technique of distilling alcohol from fermented beverages is thought to have originated in Babylonia around 400 BCE. The Babylonians found that by storing heated beer in specially made clay jugs it was possible to collect very small amounts of distilled alcohol as the beer cooled. Unfortunately, this process was extremely labor intensive and yielded only small quantities of liquor. The Babylonians used the resulting alcohol for the production of perfumes. There is no indication that it was drunk.

The emergence of liquor as a beverage can be traced back to the Middle East. The invention of the first alembic still is credited to the Islamic alchemist Jabir ibn Hayyan in the early 8th century. The alembic still operates by exploiting the different boiling points of water and alcohol. By heating a fermented beverage (such as wine) and condensing the alcohol vapors in a cooled collector the still was able to produce larger quantities of alcohol more efficiently than ever before. Distilled liquors were widely consumed in the Middle East and spread to Europe in the early 10th century through trade. A

century or so later, the first crusaders returned to Europe bringing distillation technology with them.

Many different nations in medieval Europe soon adapted liquor. At first only apothecaries, who valued it for its medicinal qualities, produced it in large quantities. In the late 12th century the distillation of liquor passed from the domain of apothecaries and alchemists into that of vintners and brewers. It is here that arise the beginnings of local liquors such as Irish whiskey and German brandy. At first the consumption of alcohol did not nearly equal that of beer and wine. With the outbreak of the Black Death in the 14th century however, strong alcoholic drinks gained favor as a means of combating the plague. Toward the end of the 14th century a process of distilling liquor from other grains was developed. This drastically cheapened the price of alcohol and gave birth to a number of other spirits. It was at this time that the creation of alcohol became the province of the distiller, and the production of liquors became firmly intertwined with the thread of Western civilization.

ALCOHOL IN FANTASY

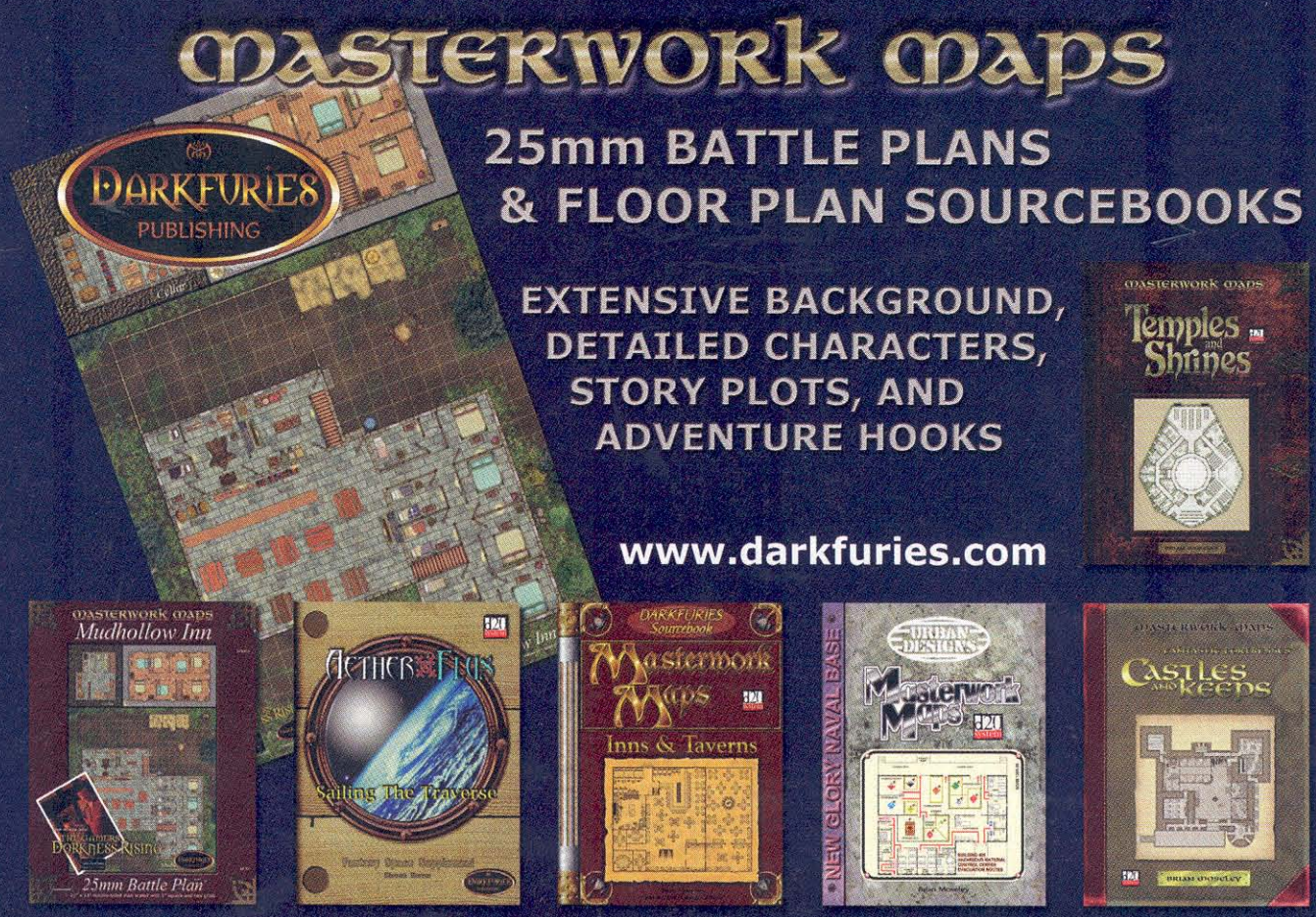
Throughout history humanity used beer and liquor not just as social lubricants, but also in medicine, trade, alchemy, and even religious rites. These themes are easily adapted to a fantasy setting, providing the impetus for any number of adventure ideas. The many religions and societies in a fantasy setting might view the consumption of alcohol in very different ways. Some societies might use alcohol as a commodity to trade with wild tribes of barbarians, while others might see it as a beverage fit only for civilized society. Various religions might advocate temperance, punishing those who fall prey to the lure of drink, while others might use alcohol heavily in their rituals. In your campaign alcohol can be a source of camaraderie or conflict.

The brews described herein are but a few examples of how beer and liquor can be adapted to a fantasy setting. All of these concoctions are magical or alchemical in nature, requiring special skills to create.

ALCHEMICAL BREWS

The following selection of brews are made using Craft (alchemy), although DMs might wish to give those with 5 or more ranks in Profession (brewing) a +2 synergy bonus on the check. Although these quantities are given in terms of single servings, large batches can be easily produced. A bottle is assumed to hold 2 flagons, 4 glasses, or 12 shots of liquid. A waterskin holds twice this amount. A barrel holds 150 flagons, 300 glasses, or 900 shots of liquid.

Burrfoot's Nut Brown Ale: This full-bodied ale is based on a recipe first attributed to Nedelmeier Burrfoot, a halfling brewmaster of great renown. Burrfoot's nut brown ale has long been used as a social lubricant among both halflings and



Alchemical Brew	Cost	Craft (alchemy) DC	Weight
Burrfoot's nut brown ale (flagon)	20 gp	20	1 lb.
Dwarven grave ale (flagon)	50 gp	25	1 lb.
Evermead (glass)	200 gp	30	1/2 lb.
Firebelly (shot)	2 gp	20	1/4 lb.
Goodale (flagon)	10 gp	20	1 lb.

taller races. "Burrfoot's," as it is commonly referred to, is different from standard tavern-fare as, in addition to the regular effects of alcohol, it also produces a mild euphoria in its drinkers. This quality is attributed to the secret recipe that Nedelmeier's descendants still follow faithfully to this day. Halflings claim that a flagon of Burrfoot's will mellow even the most taciturn dwarf, so long as he keeps drinking. Although the qualities of burrfoot's are not as miraculous as its proponents claim, more than one argument has been settled over a flagon or two. Any individual who drinks at least one pint of Burrfoot's nut brown ale takes a –2 penalty on all Sense Motive checks but gains a +2 alchemical bonus on all Diplomacy checks for the next 30 minutes. If the drinker wishes to resist these effects he must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 +2 for every additional flagon drunk). The effects are not cumulative.

Dwarven Grave Ale: When a great dwarven hero dies, skilled brewmasters are commissioned to create a signature ale to commemorate his passing. These recipes are created and brewed only once, and each is tailored specifically to the deceased's personality and exploits. Once the brew is finished it is stored in specially made barrels embellished with carved scenes of the hero's famous deeds. These barrels are given to the hero's friends and family as tokens of remembrance. Highly prized, dwarven grave ale is said to imbue those who drink it with the courage of the dwarven hero to whom it is dedicated. Any individual who imbibes at least one flagon of grave ale gains a +2 alchemical bonus on all saves made against fear effects and a +1 alchemical bonus on attack and damage rolls for the next 10 minutes.

Evermead: This pale golden liquor is a favorite of elves, who value it for both its sweet flavorful bouquet as well as its many subtle undertones. Individuals who drink even one glass of evermead are suffused for a short while with youthful vigor, freed from the infirmities of old age. Brewed from honey collected during the early spring from bees allowed access only to certain types of flowers, then combined with a number of wild spices, the brew is left to ferment in living trees shaped through use of the *wood shape* spell. After no less than a decade of fermentation the tree is tapped and the resulting evermead is strained, bottled, and prepared for consumption.

Although appreciated by elves for its taste, evermead is particularly sought after by nonelves for its ability to alleviate the effects of age. Although the drinker does not actually become younger, any individual who imbibes at least one glass of evermead loses all detrimental physical penalties to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution applied as a result of the drinker's age. Drinking evermead dispels only the negative effects of old age, bonuses accrued as a result of old age to Wisdom, Intelligence, and Charisma, as well as any other positive effects of age (dragon age categories for instance) remain unaffected. Individuals drinking evermead still age naturally and consequently it will not stave off natural death, nor any supernatural aging. This effect lasts for 12 hours per glass drunk.

Firebelly: A harsh liquor distilled by inhabitants of cold climates, firebelly is prized—by those who can keep it down—for the resistance to frigid temperatures it grants. As a result,

a bottle or two is considered to be essential gear for any who plan on braving arctic climes. Imbibing one shot of firebelly grants the drinker a +4 alchemical bonus on all Fortitude saves against nonlethal damage dealt by nonmagical cold for the next hour. Drinking additional glasses provides no further enhancement, however the original bonus may be maintained by continuing to drink at least one shot an hour.

Goodale: The common name given to a variety of ales brewed in good-aligned monasteries, goodale is valued not only for its light refreshing taste but also its mild recuperative powers. A favorite of travelers, farmers, and pilgrims, goodale is also highly sought after by generals as it allows their troops to march longer distances before becoming tired. Drinking a pint of goodale removes all penalties associated with normal fatigue (it has no effect on exhaustion or magically induced fatigue). In addition, a regular daily ration of goodale grants individuals marching overland a +2 alchemical bonus on all Constitution checks made to avoid nonlethal damage from a forced march.

MAGIC BREWS

The following brews are crafted like any other magic item, most requiring the Craft Wondrous Item feat to complete. As with the alchemical brews, the prices listed for these items are per use. Multiplying the price and costs appropriately can create larger quantities.

Beer of Eternity: This is a type of ancient beer used in burial rites by a number of primitive human societies. Gifts of *beer of eternity* and other worldly goods were often buried along with the deceased in order to placate its spirit and speed its journey to the afterlife. Although these ancient societies are long gone, recipes for *beer of eternity* have survived, carved on stone tablets or on the walls of tombs. *Beer of eternity* is exceedingly hard to brew, as it requires the brewer to impregnate the mixture with positive energy through a series of rituals and prayers. Due to its association with natural death *beer of eternity* deals damage to undead who come in contact with it (treat as holy water). In addition, any living creature who drinks at least one flagon of *beer of eternity* becomes invisible to all undead, although intelligent undead receive a DC 11 Will save to see through the illusion. This effect lasts for 1 hour. Finally, drinking a flagon of *beer of eternity* removes one negative level from the imbiber.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *invisibility to undead, restoration;* Price 750 gp.

Drowned Man Stout: Enjoyed by orcs and other evil humanoids, this dark full-bodied ale was discovered almost purely by accident by the orc chieftain Shamash "the Gullet." A mighty warlord, Shamash combined his fondness for wanton violence and strong drink to invent a particularly gruesome method of executing captured enemies. Each prisoner was placed inside a large wooden barrel into which Shamash's followers poured his favorite ale. The barrels were then sealed up and watched carefully until the struggles of the unfortunate victims subsided. Shamash and his minions found the resulting beer acquired a heady quality and distinct flavorful finish that it had not possessed before. The orcs of Shamash's horde also claimed that the brew increased their resilience to damage and would often down a flagon or two before entering combat. Although Shamash was eventually slain by an intrepid band of adventurers his legacy lives on in the form of his favorite beverage. Any individual who imbibes a flagon of *drowned man stout* gains a number of temporary hit points equal to the Hit Dice of the individual drowned in the beer (minimum of 1 hit point up to a maximum of 10). These temporary hit points last for 3 hours or until lost. Drinking more than one flagon of *drowned man stout* during one 3 hour period has no effect.

Faint necromancy; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *false life*; Price 300 gp.

Mage's Brew: This thick nutty liqueur was developed by a gnome

enchanter who wished to create an alcoholic beverage he could sip while perusing spellbooks that would give him the feeling of slight inebriation without interfering with his concentration or spellcasting. Several years of experimentation with arcane brewing techniques and magically cultured yeasts produced a cocktail that did not interfere with the drinker's concentration, instead enhancing it for a brief period. The recipe for *mage's brew* has spread throughout the scholarly community and has become so popular in some areas that wizarding schools curtail its distribution to keep ambitious apprentices from abusing its attention-focusing qualities. *Mage's brew* has none of the detrimental effects of mundane alcohol. Any individual drinking a glass of *mage's brew* gains a +2 enhancement bonus on all Concentration and Knowledge checks for 1 hour. Drinking more than one glass extends this duration, but has no further effect.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *bear's endurance, fox's cunning;* Price 80 gp.

Oathbeer: Used by dwarves as part of a highly ritualized ceremony to seal important pledges and pacts, the sharing of a flagon of *oathbeer* between individuals is a sign of friendship and devotion. The ceremony for drinking *oathbeer* requires the services of a cleric of any lawful faith who must approve of the oath to be sworn. After each individual swearing the oath has shed blood into the beer the oath is sworn and the cup passed around. *Oathbeer* binds all those who drink it to the bonds of the oath, so long as they partake of their own free will. If any of the drinkers knowingly and willfully breaks the bond, that individual suffers from the effects of a *bestow curse* spell (whose effects are usually determined at the time the oath is sworn) and all of the other drinkers become instantly aware of the betrayal. One pint of *oathbeer* is enough for ten individuals to swear by.

Strong enchantment; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse;* Price 3,000 gp.

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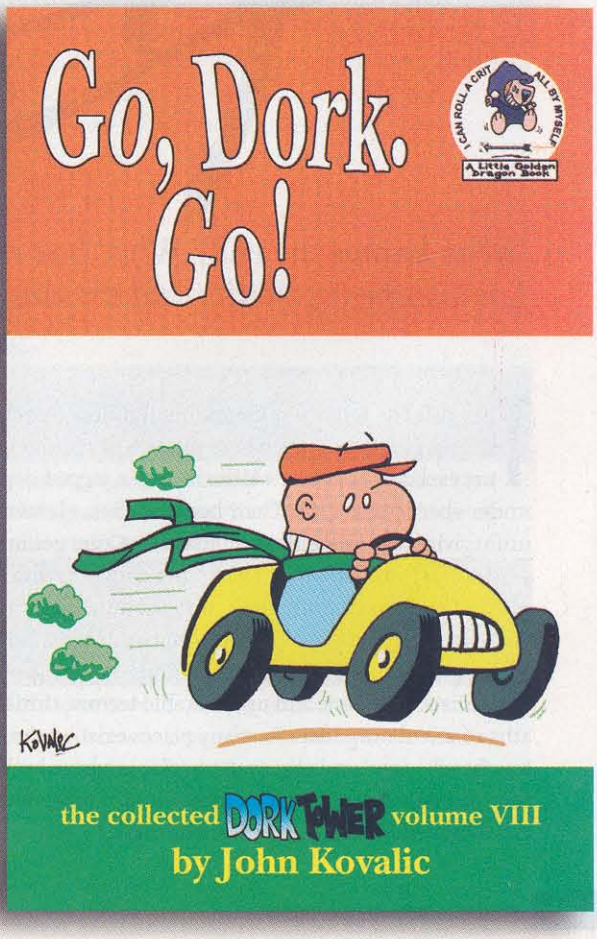
See Dork.
See Dork go.
Go, Dork! Go!

Go, Dork. Go!

"SUPERMEGAEXCELLENT!"
-The Chicago Sun-Times

http://www.dorktower.com


Go, Dork. Go!
I CAN ROLL A CRIT ALL BY MYSELF
A Little Golden Dragon Book
KOVARC
the collected DORK TOWER volume VIII
by John Kovalic

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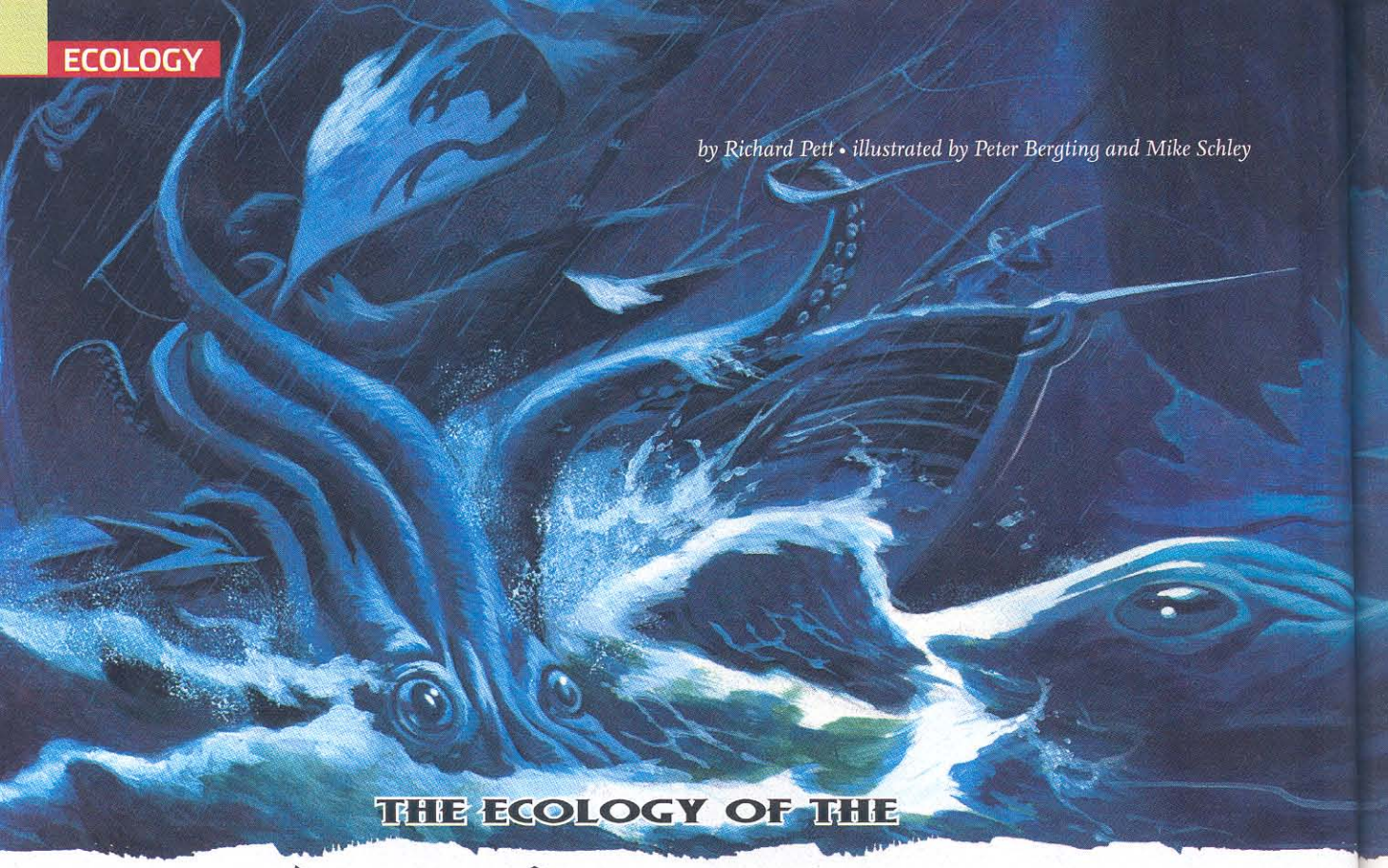


THE ECOLOGY OF THE KRAKEN

"Who knows the end? What has risen may sink, and what has sunk may rise. Loathsomeness waits and dreams in the deep..."

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Call of Cthulhu"

They rule the mightiest kingdoms, lightless trenches of crushing pressures where the sun never touches, unreachable seas that writhe in anger, jagged depths under sheer black cliffs. Their home is alien, elemental, and unforgiving. And here they are masters. Cruel geniuses possessing vast strength, they wait in the dark, weaving their plots, slowly considering their next abomination, their next move in an endless evil game of vast complexity. Not merely hulking mindless brutes nor cathedrals of flesh given fury, but sadists, torturers, and unspeakable terrors, thinking goliaths of calculating hate. So many places exist where the sea touches the land and sky, so many places where krakens—the unseen masters of the oceans—might reach out their cruel tentacles to afflict the lives of men.

HISTORY OF KRAKENS

Festering within the depths of vast watery abysses lie the lightless domains of the mercifully elusive krakens. Only the foolhardy or insane try to learn more of these terrible leviathans, as even the mere rumor of a kraken can turn back a fishing vessel or force a captain to hastily beach his ship. Those who learn much of krakens speak of scattered island communities or remote coastal villages that worship these tentacled horrors, even supplicating them with slave offerings to stave off their fury. Yet the most terrible reports arise only occasionally, ever so rarely, when some insane escapee emerges from decades in the dark to tell of air-filled prisons far below where there is no hope. These escapees never live long in the light.

Some whisper that evil gods made krakens so the creatures of the land would never dare stray far from their homes. Others argue—primarily against those who posit the opposite—that aboleths created krakens. Regardless, scant knowledge leads to conjecture, as krakens share nothing, least of all their secrets. Most laymen accept that there are fathoms where the ocean is blackest and the sea most elemental, and from these trenches of primordial fluids and infinite darkness krakens first emerged.

Krakens themselves believe they came from the mouth of the Great Unbeheld, a kraken of impossible size who sleeps within the deepest ocean abyss and whose great tentacles thread through the depths of the entire world. Only by claiming all oceans as their own and enslaving every other sea-bound race might the Great Unbeheld rise and flood the world, giving them dominion over all. Although krakens don't worship the Great Unbeheld as a god, it is treated as a communal ancestor and is often touted as a favored child of Panzuriel or even as the guard of his severed limb (see the Panzuriel sidebar).

KNOWLEDGE OF KRAKENS

The following table shows the results of a bardic knowledge or Knowledge (arcana) check related to krakens. Any sailor, port-town tavern owner, or scholar of the seas might know varied pieces of the following information. However, as every deckhand and dockside drunkard weaves tales of sea monsters, truths about krakens are often garbled by the fictions of the uninformed, superstitious, and wildly imaginative. As such, some of the information provided at low DCs (15 and lower) is blatantly false. However, higher DC results (20 or greater) contradict such yarns with actual facts.

Knowledge (arcana)

DC	Result
10	Krakens are brutish gigantic squids that plunder ships and costal communities in search of food and wealth, which they collect in vast coral palaces deep underwater.
15	Krakens can snatch sailors off the decks of their ships with two massive, barbed tentacles. A ship might ward off a kraken attack by hauling five dead bodies and a chest of copper behind it.
20	Krakens are loners with an astonishing sense of their own importance and a hard and cruel intelligence. They can also dominate native animals and often press intelligent undersea creatures into their service.
25	Krakens can shoot clouds of murky black ink and jet through the water with near-unparalleled speed. Their lairs deep below the waves often hold huge air-filled caverns to keep and breed hopeless generations of slaves but rarely any substantial material wealth.
30	Krakens possess the ability to control the weather and winds. Rumors persist of islands and ports where whole populations worship an indvidual kraken. These locals make living sacrifices to the kraken and act as its eyes and ears on land.

THE CALL OF THE KRAKEN

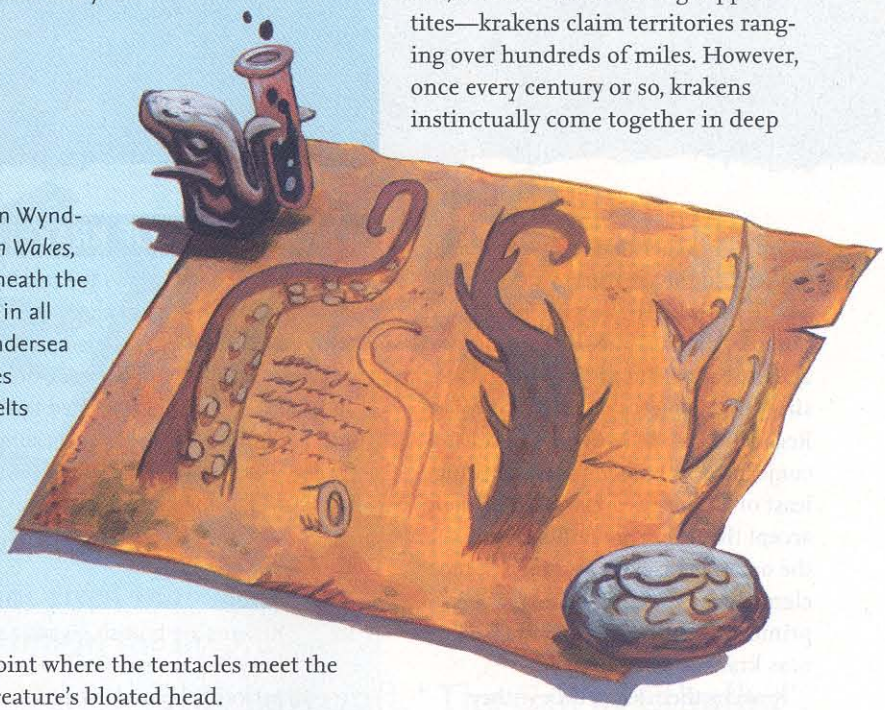
Krakens first appeared in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS as part of the 1983 *Monster Manual 2*, by Gary Gygax, and have remained a part of the game ever since. However, they bear a far deeper history than merely their appearances in D&D bestiaries.

For centuries, krakens have lurked as legendary terrors of the sea. Erik Pontoppidan, a Norwegian bishop, first described a kraken in his *Natural History of Norway* (1752), noting it as a "floating island" one and a half miles across. Also known as a krabben, sciucrak, or hafgufe, the tales of numerous cultures detail krakenlike creatures. Such tales even provided the inspiration for the poem "The Kraken," by Alfred Lord Tennyson:

"Below the thunders of the upper deep,
Far, far beneath in abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep,
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee..."

In more recent years, British novelist John Wyndham's novel, *Out of the Deeps*, or *The Kraken Wakes*, presents a perfectly insidious plot from beneath the sea (although it is devoid of actual krakens in all but its title). In this tale, an invulnerable undersea intelligence terrorizes shipping lanes, leaves islands and ports empty, and eventually melts the polar-ice caps, flooding the land.

For D&D's most recent encounters with krakens, scour "The Styes" in DUNGEON #121 or dare alien depths in "Seekers of the Silver Forge" in DUNGEON #125.



PHYSIOLOGY OF KRAKENS

Essentially huge intelligent squids, krakens never stop growing. The average kraken measures around 100 feet long. However, the near-immortality of these creatures leads to tales of staggeringly huge beasts that sailors mistake for small islands.

Average krakens possess a distinctive head, bilateral symmetry, and tentacles with suckers and hooks. Six of the beasts' tentacles stretch to merely 30 feet in length, while the remaining two, covered in cruel barbs, writhe to nearly 60 feet long. A huge beak, curved and capable of tearing apart whales, nestles at the point where the tentacles meet the creature's bloated head.

Krakens have huge eyes, which give them formidable sight and the ability to hunt in total darkness. Most krakens spend their lives at incredible ocean depths, but some make lairs near the lands of men where there are plentiful supplies of food and slaves. Voracious carnivores, krakens need vast territories in which to feed, the greatest whale constituting little more than a fair meal to a kraken.

Despite their formidable shapes, krakens do not view their own forms as sacred and willingly alter themselves if they believe it might benefit them in any way, whether it be with increased power or simply a more threatening appearance (grafts, templates, and prestige classes—especially those in *Lords of Madness*—see regular adoption by krakens).

Krakens lay cylindrical membranous eggs, but these are rarely seen. Indeed, krakens seem to mate only every century or so in a ritual known to them as the Hateful Compulsion, where the seas churn as though in the grip of some dreadful storm.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY OF KRAKENS

Loners—primarily because of their evil, selfish minds and huge appetites—krakens claim territories ranging over hundreds of miles. However, once every century or so, krakens instinctually come together in deep ocean trenches to mate. This fleshy, feeling ritual is abhorrent to the coldly calculating minds of krakens and is known to them as the Hateful Compulsion. Krakens from vast areas of the ocean gather, both fearful of the danger in doing so but unable to control their lustful compulsions. Males frequently get torn to pieces by the less numerous females in their insane desire to be fertilized, turning the sea black with kraken blood and causing parts of limbs and heads to wash ashore in oily froths. (This black rotting flesh has an appalling odor

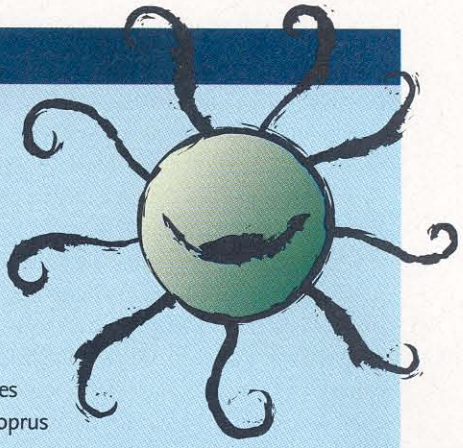
and is avoided by living animals.) In their coitus-fuelled madness krakens involuntarily create cataclysmic storms (see page 94 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), leading to horrifically sized whirlpools and waves, which might rage for months or even years. The Hateful Compulsion continues until all the assembled females are impregnated, an act that forces a male to struggle for life within his mate's grip, a lustful battle capable of lasting for months. Fearing such eventualities, some krakens have risked the most extreme measures—including self surgery and undeath—to avoid these spawning moots.

After mating, great black eggs soon fill deep oceanic trenches. Kraken young take a decade to hatch, and—mercifully—over this time even the brood-mothers who watch their spawn lose many of their eggs to daring predators. Occasionally, and for reasons even krakens cannot understand, some brood-mothers devour their whole clutch, an act that always leads to the loss of the kraken's sanity. Such an insane kraken is a terrible foe indeed, as its calamitous psychosis menaces anything that lives in or near the sea. Some suggest that this madness is connected with the insane god, Tharizdun, as part of some unfathomable plot he weaves from his prison. The few krakens who don't worship Panzuriel often turn to Tharizdun, usually after witnessing a brood-mother consume her young.

All krakens believe themselves to be divine creatures and the rightful rulers of the deep. As such they cannot conceive of a sea without their presence. Thus, they never knowingly put themselves at physical risk and always plan a hundred cunning escapes. Krakens possess cruel, calculating intelligences and use them to move events to their own advantage. Effectively immortal, krakens patiently plot over centuries to concoct elaborate escapes, hatch fearful schemes, and breed loyal servants in their sightless lairs deep below the waves. While nearly all krakens keep slaves or dupe worshipers, kraken elders often manipulate the younger of their kind, sacrificing them to enemies or duping them into performing dangerous undertakings. The prevalence of such trickery causes krakens to wisely avoid others of their kind and hold them in constant suspicion.

Many krakens—but by no means all—keep lairs in caves deep below the waves. These dens often serve as little more than hiding places, both for the kraken and the useful treasures it might collect. To krakens, prime among such exploitable valuables

PANZURIEL



Intermediate God (Neutral Evil)

The god of the seas' foulest evils, Panzuriel ever seeks twisted minds and abominable visionaries to carry out his will both below and above the waves. The Writhing One welcomes all evil ocean-dwelling creatures into his crushing fold with sahuagin, sea hags, scrags, and kuo-toas (heretics against Bildoolpoolp) proving particularly prevalent. However, Panzuriel prefers creatures warped of body as well as of mind, making koprus and krakens his favored children.

Panzuriel bears an ancient hatred for Deep Sashelas, patron of aquatic elves. In aeons long lost, Panzuriel sought to make the darkened lands below the sea his exclusive dominion, perverting them into roiling oceans of fluid horrors. An alliance of opposed gods, led by Deep Sashelas, rose to resist the Writhing One, driving his corruptive ambition from the Material Plane and cutting off his left foot. The god's massive, gnarled appendage fell into the ocean but was never found. Thus, Panzuriel retains his link to the mortal world and, through his favored minions, seeks to corrupt the seas and avenge his ancient exile.

Symbol: A left footprint, kraken head, or squid eye surrounded by nine tentacles.

Portfolio: Confusion, murder, subversion, and evil aquatic creatures.

Domains: Corruption[1], Darkness, Evil, Water.

Favored Weapon: Whip (for land-dwelling worshipers) or net (for use underwater).

Clerical Training: Worshipers must sacrifice a sea elf in a ceremony known as the Endless Revenging.

Quests: Panzuriel sends visions to his servants to destroy specific ships, raid undersea and coastal communities, and defile the temples of all other aquatic deities.

Prayers: Hugely complex low tonal chants, usually conducted in vast groups, the echoing songs of Panzuriel's worshipers are sometimes heard even on the surface, where mariners refer to the doleful droning as the "Wail of the Severed God."

Temples: Huge cave complexes deep underwater or simple stone circles centered around tentacled idols serve as Panzuriel's temples. Krakens often force slaves to toil for centuries, digging unholy trenches deep enough to reveal portals leading to the Pool of Panzuriel (said to fester somewhere in Carceri).

Rites: Panzuriel regards the sea as a battleground between himself and the hated sea elves, making raiding and slaughter the only rites he demands.

Herald and Allies: Panzuriel's herald is a 50 HD pseudonatural[2] kraken known as Tirbitus. Corrupted by Panzuriel's maddened will, Tirbitus hardly resembles a kraken anymore, appearing more like the Writhing One's symbol made flesh: a swollen red eye surrounded by countless flailing tentacles. Panzuriel's allies and those he most commonly sends to fulfill *planar ally* spells are callers from the deeps[3], half-fiend krakens, and scyllans[3].

1 Detailed in the *Book of Vile Darkness*.

2 Detailed in *Lords of Madness*.

3 Detailed in *Stormwrack*.

KRAKEN CULT: THE BROOD OF WORSHIPFUL K'THURALL

For centuries, the people of remote St. Telers island have kept a deadly secret. Their religion, on the exterior nothing more than a quaint island tradition of worshiping spirits of the sea, in fact reveres the depths-spawned abomination they know as Worshipful K'thurall.

Having lived below the island for countless ages, Worshipful K'thurall claims St. Telers and the seas around it as his personal dominion. In the centuries since worshipers came to his island, K'thurall has styled himself as their patron deity and the sole source of either their prosperity or annihilation. Fearful and reverent toward their worldly god, all the people of St. Telers devotedly serve the kraken—whispering frequent prayers and decorating their structures with countless ichthyoidal shapes—dreading his anger and the storms and droughts it incurs.

Worshipful K'thurall forces two obligations upon his cultists: sacrifice and service. Sacrifice to K'thurall is conducted in a yearly ceremony known as the Drowning Man. In this ritual a dozen men and women are imprisoned within the belly of a gigantic man-shaped wicker cage, then slowly lowered off a vast cliff known to the locals as the Despair of Salvation. K'thurall accepts the drowning victims and dines not only upon their flesh, but their very souls, as the rite has long since transformed him into a soul eater (see page 66 of the *Book of Vile Darkness*). Some sacrifices he lets drown, transforming them into drowned undead (see page 46 of the *Monster Manual III*), which he then sends to attack ships and bring him more victims.

Even as a yearly offering, the Drowning Man ceremony threatens to deplete the adult population of St. Telers. Thus, many of Worshipful K'thurall's cultists travel to distant lands, telling of their home as either an island paradise or an oppressed slave-state in need of a savior, all in hopes of luring victims to the Drowning Man.

For their life-long service, Worshipful K'thurall blesses his most pious followers with his touch: a "gift" his cultists claim brings them "closer to the sea," but in fact begins the transformation into a deep thrall (a kraken monster cultist prestige class from "The Minions of Darkness" in DRAGON #300). The island elders exhibit the most obvious changes, as they are afflicted with huge bulbous eyes, tentaclelike limbs, gasping breath, and innumerable skinless abscesses—marks from the touch of K'thurall's powerful suckered arms. Once these cultists complete their apotheosis into creatures more kraken than humanoid, Worshipful K'thurall accepts their leap from the Despair of Salvation. Upon taking this final step, K'thurall welcomes his deluded children into the ranks of an aberrant generation of cultists that he sequesters beneath the island in a hellish, tentacular mockery of life above.

are slaves, and as such a kraken's lair might hold several leaking air-filled chambers. Egotists of the highest degree, krakens never deign to sully their tentacles with simple chores. Whether its desires entail carving its lair to meet its whims or spying upon land-dwelling creatures, a kraken's slaves serve out of fear and the knowledge that escape means only a crushing death miles below the surface. Regardless of their uses, to krakens, the word "slave" and "meal" often prove interchangeable.

Those krakens truly devoted to keeping slaves might house whole degraded societies within their lairs, as generation after generation of servants are born, serve, and die, never knowing a world of light and open air. Even if liberated, such slaves rarely flourish if brought to the surface, as all their minds know are the horrors of worshiping a living god and its foul experiments. This is to say nothing of the scars, grafts, and other manipulations krakens regularly inflict upon their servants to better serve their needs.

Besides slaves, krakens often maintain relationships with groups of other underwater-dwelling evil creatures. While such associations are rarely equal, creatures like sahuagin, scrags, and sea hags frequently worship krakens or pay them tribute in return for aid or protection. To a kraken, such arrangements serve merely as preliminaries to it claiming an entire tribe, society, or race as its slaves.

VS KRAKENS

Krakens possess an astonishing sense of self-preservation and, if ever victory seems unlikely, retreat always remains an option. Easily embittered and possessing lengthy memories, a defeated kraken might calculate its revenge for decades, inflicting brutal retribution upon foes who have long forgotten their victories.

Watch the Weather: Krakens use their *control weather* and *control winds* spell-like abilities to bring foes to them or sink vessels without ever rising above the water. Despite these powers, many krakens relish the chance to personally splinter ship masts and drown weaker creatures. Many seafarers know to rightly fear gales that seemingly arise from nowhere, as these might prove to be the work of a kraken.

The Terrible Embrace: A kraken possesses a monstrous grapple modifier: +44 at the very least. Its constrict attack deals automatic damage every round, which might wear down even the mightiest foe and could prove impossible to break. With such a significant modifier, a kraken might opt to take a –20 penalty on its grapple check to use only one tentacle and retain its ability to make attacks and threaten an area (see the description of the improved grapple ability on page 310 of the *Monster Manual*). With merely a second opposed grapple check a kraken might move with its victim, dragging it underwater to a terrible, gurgling end (see the descriptions of moving while grappling on page 156 of the *Player's Handbook* and drowning on page 304 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*). Thus, magic items like *helms of underwater action* or *potions of water breathing* might help those fighting krakens stay alive for a time, but only treasures

like a *cape of the montebank, cloak of etherealness, ring of freedom of movement,* or armor with the slick special ability might save a kraken hunter's life.

Tentacle Attacks: When facing a kraken, sundering the creature's tentacles proves the most effective way to avoid being grappled. A kraken's tentacles can be specifically targeted with sunder attempts as per the rules on page 162 of the *Monster Manual.* Attacks upon the tentacles, however, deal less damage to the kraken as a whole. Thus, those combating krakens should stay cautious when making such targeted attacks.

Water Reliant: Krakens are most confident and deadly within the expanses of the seas. However, those somehow removed from such an environment prove a far less significant threat. If a kraken can be lured into a port or other costal inlet, spells like *control water,* various *wall* spells, and creative uses of *transmute rock to mud* or *move earth* might trap the creature inland. Even more effectively, if such traps dispose of the water, leaving the kraken beached, the monstrosity cannot breathe and thus swiftly suffocates. Krakens are keenly aware of their reliance on water, however, making such traps incredibly difficult to spring.

Defensive Defilers: In keeping with their extreme senses of self-preservation, krakens often protect themselves within layers of magical defenses. At the most basic level, this means making use of their *resist energy* spell-like ability (usually cast to resist electricity). Krakens with slaves might also have spellcasters cast long-lasting defensive spells like *mage armor, protection from arrows,* or *shield other.* The most twisted and ambitious krakens might even seek out creatures capable of giving them grafts or research ways to adopt a variety of acquired templates.

Minions and Worshipers: Commonly encountered alone, krakens usually prefer solitude as they hunt or attack choice targets. Despite these tendencies, krakens regularly have access to a horde of allies, whether these minions be deluded worshipers, slaves, monstrous allies, or sea creatures they control through the use of their *dominate animal* spell-like ability. Those hunting a kraken should remain exceptionally wary, as any person or beast might secretly be a kraken's servant.

Retreat and Revenge: Krakens willingly use their jet ability to escape at rapid speeds, covering such retreats with clouds of ink. Once out of direct danger, a kraken invariably begins plotting its revenge, relying on its minions to extend its reach far beyond the sea. However, even with armies of minions at their disposal, krakens favor ending such standing debts themselves. Thus, a kraken's servants often merely lure prey within reach, letting their master take revenge at his leisure.

AGE OF WORMS

by F. Wesley Schneider • illustrated by Eva Widermann

Wormfood

Surviving the Age of Worms Adventure Path

While the pages of *Dungeon* magazine present everything a DM needs to run the Age of Worms Adventure Path, every month *Dragon* gives the players of that—or any other campaign—tools to enhance their gaming experience.

Nearly every adventurer's career relies greatly on trade, the buying and selling that makes up the preparation for any adventure and the payoff afterward. Diamond Lake, the starting town of the Age of Worms Adventure Path, affords PCs a wealth of distinctive opportunities for such business. The goods presented here are representative of those that might be found in Diamond Lake or any other mining community and serve as examples of items that help to make a setting truly unique.

The Basics

Someone has to keep the folk of Diamond Lake supplied in their daily ventures—legitimate or otherwise—and Taggin, owner of the town's largest general store, gladly provides... regardless of the cost to his customers.

Despite the town's lawlessness, most of Diamond Lake's people share the same wants and needs as those of any other small community. Yet, being a mining town first and foremost, certain goods—rare in other settlements—are readily found here among more standard supplies.

Those shopping about Diamond Lake should have little trouble finding any common piece of adventuring gear, special substance, or tool described in the *Player's Handbook*, as long as it costs less than 40 gp. Arms and armor are also available, although the prices of these rarely rise above 200 gp. While it's unlikely that the general store would carry such warlike wares, The Captain's Blade, Venelle's, and other vendors detailed in "Backdrop: Diamond Lake" in *Dungeon* #124 do. Rarer items (like thunderstones or hourglasses) also aren't readily available from the general store but nearly anything can be imported from the nearby Free City. The transit of such items commonly takes at least a week, but there is rarely an additional mark-up. Items uncommon even in the Free City, such as poisons, spell components, and special materials (like cold iron), can be requested, but include at least a 15% up-charge.

Besides the basic supplies, numerous mining-related items from the *Arms and Equipment Guide* regularly appear in the shops and stalls of Diamond Lake. Most notable among these goods are assenders/sliders, fog-cutter lanterns, folding saws, mess kits, metal tongs, percolators, pulleys, tarps, and winches. Some alchemical items might also be available, such as stonebreaker acid, clearbreath, longbreath, and vermin bane, but at prices 20% higher than those listed.

Numerous items unique to Diamond Lake, or towns like it, also regularly appear scattered amid the more common staples and supplies:

Breathing Masks: To avoid the hacking conclusion of black lung or grinders disease, many miners wear breathing masks: cloth face and nose covers filled with linen strips and thick leaves, tied behind the head with a leather strap. Wearing a breathing mask provides a +1 circumstance bonus on saves made against inhaled poisons. Diamond Lake's general store provides breathing masks, as do several of the mine managers—the more heartless of them charging an exorbitant price.

Canaries: An infamous ever-twittering feature of Taggin's general store also affords miners some comfort in their daily labors. An over-packed, 6-foot cube of chicken wire and twigs contains a heavily-ruffled flock of canaries. Taggin maintains a firm policy of charging customers not merely for the birds they intend to purchase, but for every canary they release from the cage. Canaries possess the same statistics as thrushes (found on page 203 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), except that their Constitution scores are merely 1 and thus their Fortitude saves are made at a –3 penalty. Miners regularly carry canaries in small cages into the mines with them , hoping that

any poisons in the air affect their bird first and warn them of danger.

Maps: Characters interested in obtaining maps of Diamond Lake or the surrounding area might purchase them from the garrison's Chief Cartographer, Dietrik Cicaeda, for 5 sp. Dietrik also possesses maps of greater detail, noting ownership and the boundaries between land claims dating back nearly 80 years. He might be convinced to make copies of these originals or sell his backup copies for 2 gp.

Mining Helmet: These metal skullcaps have slight brims and tiny lanterns affixed to the fronts. Such helmets provide wearers with a +1 armor bonus against falling rocks (such as from the traps detailed in Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). These helmets only aid a character's Armor Class in the case of falling rocks and otherwise do not affect AC. The lantern on a miner's helmet sheds bright illumination to a radius of 10 feet, shadowy illumination to a radius of 20 feet, and lasts 8 hours per pint of oil.

Mining Outfit: Miners require sturdy clothing capable of protecting them from the bumps and jostles of their daily labor. To supply them, Diamond Lake's general store offers mining outfits for 3 gp. These sets of clothing include a padded shirt, thick pants, a leather poncholike over-tunic, a wide-brimmed leather hat, and a pair of simple goggles.

Pickaxe: Crashing and clapping as they chip away at rock and iron within sweltering mines, pickaxes hardly make useful weapons. Top-heavy and unwieldy, these crude tools are a far cry from the heavy and light picks crafted for military purposes (detailed in the *Player's Handbook*). When used as a weapon, treat a pickaxe as a heavy pick with a –2 penalty on attack rolls.

GOODS IN DIAMOND LAKE

Item	Cost	Weight
Birdcage, small	20 sp	1 lb.
Breathing Mask	6 gp	1/2 lb.
Canary	1 sp	—
Diamond water elixir	40 gp	—
Miner's Hat	1 gp	1 lb.
Miner's Outfit	3 gp	6 lb.
Pickaxe	8 gp	6 lb.
Rockhammer	6 gp	10 lb.
Smelling salts	20 gp	—

Rockhammer: Little more than chunks of pig-iron affixed to splintering hafts, rockhammers serve miners in breaking apart and molding dense rocks and metals. When put to use on more mobile targets these massive hammers prove incredibly awkward, yet provide passingly destructive effects to warrant their occasional use as weapons. When used as a weapon, treat a rockhammer as a warhammer with a –2 penalty on attack rolls.

SPECIAL GOODS

Amid tides of booze and cloying, aphrodisiac perfumes, the harlots and hucksters of Diamond Lake's most popular saloon, Zalamandra's Emporium, cater to both their guests' dreams and nightmares.

While Taggin's general store provides the folk of Diamond Lake with the best in dried food and mine fashion, the Emporium and other specialty stores cater to more discerning and colorful tastes.

Diamond Water Elixir: An herbal remedy made from local vegetation, salts from the mines, and Diamond Lake's tainted water, this concoction is meant to help cure illness. Local sayings about the medicine rightly claim that drinkers "will feel a lot worse before they feel any better." Despite its name, diamond water elixir is a cloudy brownish mixture. Characters who imbibe a flask of diamond water elixir recover 2 points lost to ability score damage (instead of the usual 1) for that day. However, the user is sickened for 24 hours after consuming this drought. Diamond water elixir is most readily available from the Church of St. Cuthbert, the Bronzewood Lodge, the sage Allustan, or Purple Prose from the Midnight Salute (at double the usual price).

Smelling Salts: Usually contained in small pouches or vials, a few pinches of these acrid white crystals aid in rousing the unconscious. When waved under the nose of a character who has been reduced to negative hit points but is stable, the character may immediately make a percentile roll to become conscious. Normally, the chance of regaining consciousness is only 10%, but when using smelling salts the chance is raised to 30%. Smelling salts can be purchased in Diamond Lake from Benazel the Alchemist or from any inn, restaurant, or tavern keeper for a 20% higher price.

ILLICIT GOODS

Only Diamond Lake's most desperate drink, smoke, and snort at the Feral Dog, where tabs are often settled by picking the pockets of the dead.

From the Midnight Salute to the Feral Dog, pleasures both exotic and gross are mere gold pieces away. Those interested in incorporating these elements into their game should see the *Book of Vile Darkness* and the article "Drunkards & Flagons" in this issue.

Diamond Water Ale: Created and distilled in much the same way as diamond water elixir, this thick, muddy ale has a chokingly hoppy taste (usually riddled with crunchy bits from its imperfect brewing process). Drinking a pint of diamond water ale requires a DC 12 Fortitude save, with those who fail becoming sickened. Sickened drinkers become nauseated, while nauseated drinkers fall unconscious for 1d6 hours. Craft (alchemy) DC: 14. Cost: 8 sp.

Kalamanthis: Perhaps one of Diamond Lake's most notorious claims to fame—a considerable statement—is the plant kalamanthis. A potent narcotic cultivated by the monks of the Twilight Monastery outside Diamond Lake, parts of the kalamanthis plant can be prepared and used in three separate ways: the raw root can be chewed, the leaf can be dried and smoked, and the sap can be boiled into a concentrated paste and injected. Kalamanthis is more thoroughly detailed in the online supplement "Age of Worms Overload," found at **paizo.com**.

Miner's Milk: A syrupy whiskey brewed in several makeshift stills behind the Thirsty Gar, local workers exaggerate that a drop of miner's milk can crack stone. One shot of miner's milk requires a DC 14 Fortitude save. Those who succeed gain a +2 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saves made against poison for the next hour, while those who fail fall unconscious for 1d6 hours. Craft (alchemy) DC: 20. Cost: 5 gp.

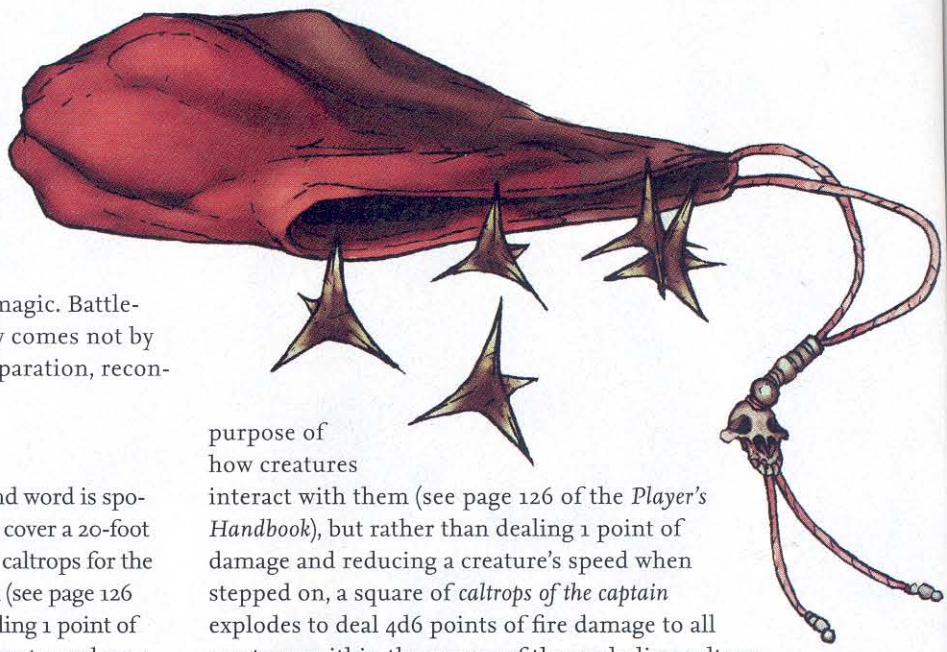
FOR DMS

From the ship-swappers and parrot vendors of seaside towns to the carriage makers and personal jewelers of the most bustling cities, a settlement's merchandise sets a theme faster than any other description. DMs interested in establishing a location as special or unique should consider offering players a variety of unique goods, just as this article does for a typical mining town.

DMs using Diamond Lake or creating a similar community might also want to incorporate minor magic items into the stocks of the town vendors. Being a relatively poor community, only the most minor magic should be available, such as magic items that cost no more than 1,500 gp. DMs should also consider that just because a shop advertises magical goods doesn't mean that an unscrupulous merchant actually sells extraordinary merchandise.

by Scott Noel • illustrated by Attila Adorjany

ARSENAL OF THE WAR MAGES



Wizards tend to craft items that enhance their own abilities and those of the warriors who protect them. Some, however, work for military organizations, where they discover that soldiers need more than just weapons enhanced by the power of magic. Battle-hardened wizards often learn that victory comes not by strength of arms, but rather through preparation, reconnaissance, and clear communications.

CALTROPS OF THE CAPTAIN

When placed on the ground and its command word is spoken, one of these glass caltrops multiplies to cover a 20-foot radius. These magic caltrops act like normal caltrops for the purpose of how creatures interact with them (see page 126 of the *Player's Handbook*), but rather than dealing 1 point of damage and reducing a creature's speed when stepped on, a square of *caltrops of the captain* explodes to deal 2d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within the square of the exploding caltrop (DC 14 Reflex save for half damage). Once the caltrops in a square explode none remain in that square and it is safe to walk through normally. Once activated, the caltrops remain for 2 hours before turning to dust.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *fireball;* Price 1,000 gp; Weight —.

CALTROPS OF THE GENERAL

Similar to the *caltrops of the captain, caltrops of the general* cover a larger area and deal more damage. When placed on the ground and its command word is spoken, one of these lead caltrops multiplies to cover a 30-foot radius. These magic caltrops act like normal caltrops for the purpose of how creatures interact with them (see page 126 of the *Player's Handbook*), but rather than dealing 1 point of damage and reducing a creature's speed when stepped on, a square of *caltrops of the captain* explodes to deal 4d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within the square of the exploding caltrop (DC 14 Reflex save for half damage). Once the caltrops in a square explode none remain in that square and it is safe to walk through normally. Once activated, the caltrops remain for 2 hours before turning to dust.

Moderate evocation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *fireball;* Price 4,000 gp; Weight —.

CALTROPS OF THE SCOUT

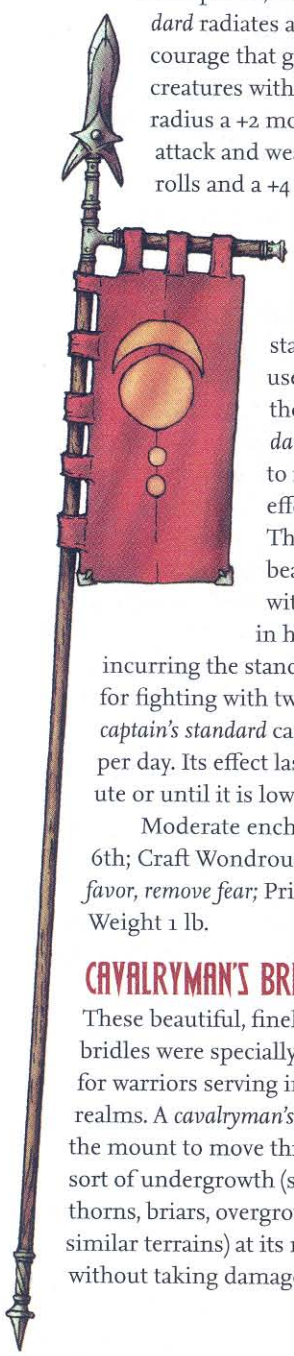
When placed on the ground and its command word is spoken, one of these cold iron caltrops multiplies to cover a 10-foot radius. These magic caltrops act like normal caltrops for the purpose of how creatures interact with them (see page 126 of the *Player's Handbook*) and how they reduce the movement of creatures affected by them. *Caltrops of the scout* act as *+1 cold iron weapons,* however, giving them a +1 attack bonus

and allowing them to overcome damage reduction. In addition, they deal 1d3+1 points of damage (instead of 1 point of damage). Once activated, the caltrops remain for 2 hours (even after they affect a creature) before turning to dust.

Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor; Price 2,000 gp; Weight —.

CAPTAIN'S STANDARD

These simple banners typically hang from the shafts of longspears. When raised in combat and the command word spoken, a *captain's standard* radiates an aura of courage that grants allied creatures within a 30-foot radius a +2 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls and a +4 morale bonus on saving throws made to resist fear effects. If the standard bearer uses the weapon the *captain's standard* is attached to in melee the effect is broken. The standard bearer can fight with a weapon in his other hand, incurring the standard penalties for fighting with two weapons. A *captain's standard* can be used once per day. Its effect lasts for 1 minute or until it is lowered.

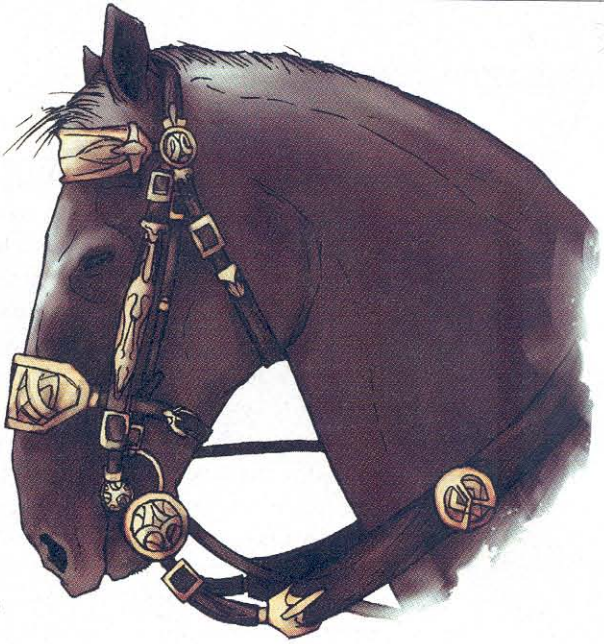


Moderate enchantment; CL 6th; Craft Wondrous Item, *divine favor, remove fear;* Price 7,600 gp; Weight 1 lb.

CAVALRYMAN'S BRIDLE

These beautiful, finely tooled bridles were specially designed for warriors serving in woodland realms. A *cavalryman's bridle* allows the mount to move through any sort of undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrains) at its normal speed, without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. Magically manipulated thorns, briars, and overgrown areas still affect it. In addition, the mount leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked. Its rider may choose for the mount to leave a trail if so desired. The mount must be wearing light or no barding to gain these benefits.

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *freedom of movement, pass without trace;* Price 10,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.



CAVALRYMAN'S SADDLE

Horsemen in the field covet these magnificent items. A *cavalryman's saddle* increases a mount's base land speed by 10 feet, grants it a +5 competence bonus on Jump checks, and grants it the benefits of the feats Endurance and Run.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *jump, longstrider;* Price 8,500 gp; Weight 30 lb.

CAVALRYMAN'S SPURS

These intricately crafted spurs, of the type gifted to cavalry officers as a mark of status, attach to any boot and are small enough that they do not impede the wearer's ability to walk or run. These spurs grant the wearer a +5 bonus on Ride and Handle Animal checks. In addition, a rider wearing *cavalryman's spurs* has a 95% chance of staying in the saddle if knocked unconscious, regardless of the type of saddle he uses (but not if he is riding without a saddle).

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Wondrous Item, *calm animals;* Price 7,000 gp; Weight —.

EARRINGS OF THE WOLF

Usually crafted to include a military unit insignia, these earrings allow wearers of an attuned set to communicate over great distances using only their normal speaking voices, even if caught in the din of battle. A typical attuned set consists of a dozen earrings. Every individual wearing an *earring of the wolf* is in constant communication with every other wearer of an attuned set, hearing every word spoken by each other wearer of an attuned earring. An *earring of the wolf* ignores all other noises except its wearer's voice, regardless of the volume of other sounds. You need only wear one *earring of the wolf* for it to function. *Earrings of the wolf* have a range of 1 mile. Not every earring must be within 1 mile of the rest of its attuned set, but an earring can only hear from and transmit to others in its set within 1 mile of its location. Magical *silence,* 5 feet of stone, 1 foot of common metal (or a thin sheet of lead), or 10 feet of wood or dirt blocks the earring's effect.

An *earring of the wolf* works only with the other earrings in its own attuned set. Additional earrings can be made and joined to an existing set, but only if all other earrings are present during

the creation of the new one, allowing them all to be attuned together.

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *message;* Price 2,000 gp per earring; Weight —.

GAUNTLETS OF THE SIEGEBREAKER

These heavy armored gauntlets grant their wearer a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength. The wearer is considered armed for the purpose of making or provoking attacks of opportunity, and any strike he makes with a gauntlet deals lethal damage. In addition, whenever a wearer of *gauntlets of the siegebreaker* makes a sunder attack or attacks a wall or other structural element the attack ignores hardness and deals 2d4 points of damage to such objects. Three times per day, the wearer can touch a door or gate and affect the portal with a *knock* spell as if cast by a 15th-level caster.

Strong transmutation; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *bull's strength, knock;* Price 11,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

QUIVER OF THE NORTH WIND

While a *quiver of the north wind* appears to only hold a score of arrows, it in fact houses an extradimensional space that can hold up to 200 arrows. It always weighs the same no matter how many arrows are placed inside it. A *quiver of the north wind* has two additional properties as well. After a character bears the quiver for 24 hours, the *quiver of the north wind* attunes to that character. Thereafter, if anyone other than the quiver's owner attempts to fire an arrow from the quiver the arrow disperses into harmless mist mid-flight. Lastly, three times per day the quiver allows its owner to cast a *true strike* spell that can only affect ranged attacks.

Moderate conjuration and divination; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *true strike;* Price 12,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

SCOUT'S JOURNAL

A *scout's journal* typically appears not as a book but rather as a large ornate parchment scroll brilliantly illuminated with mysterious symbols mounted on a backing of supple worked leather. These scrolls are opened or closed using two rolling rods on each side. Rolled into the parchment of a new *scout's journal* is a plain silver ring. Wearing this ring does not take up a magic item slot (although it does glow with moderate divination magic if *detect magic* is used on it). The journal tracks the ring wearer, creating a perfectly accurate map of where he goes and annotating the margins with descriptions (in Common) and sketches of more interesting features the wearer sees (determined at the DM's discretion). The map and notes are based only on what the ring wearer sees and does; it does not fill in unseen areas or make assumptions. The journal records only maps, notes, and sketches, and cannot be used to record specific messages or spells (either as a spellbook or a scroll). The map covers an area of 100 square miles (10 miles by 10 miles). Once a map and notes cover the entire parchment (typically by exploring most of the area the parchment can map out) both it and the ring lose their magical properties and revert to being nothing more than a map (with extensive notes) and a plain silver ring worth 50 gp. The ring can be reused to create a new *scout's journal,* reducing the cost of creating the new item by 50 gp. A ring can only be attuned to one piece of parchment at a time.

Strong divination; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *locate object, permanent image;* Price 2,000 gp; Weight 2 lb. (parchment only); Cost 1,025 gp + 78 XP.

SENTRY'S EYE

Elven wizards first created these items, composed of small semiprecious stones wrapped in gold wire and carved with runes, to aid their elven comrades on patrol. When held, a *scout's eye* grants a +5 enhancement bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. In addition, the wielder can automatically determine the exact time as well as where true north lies in relation to himself, as if he had 5 ranks in Survival.

Moderate divination; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *know direction;* Price 9,500 gp; Weight —.

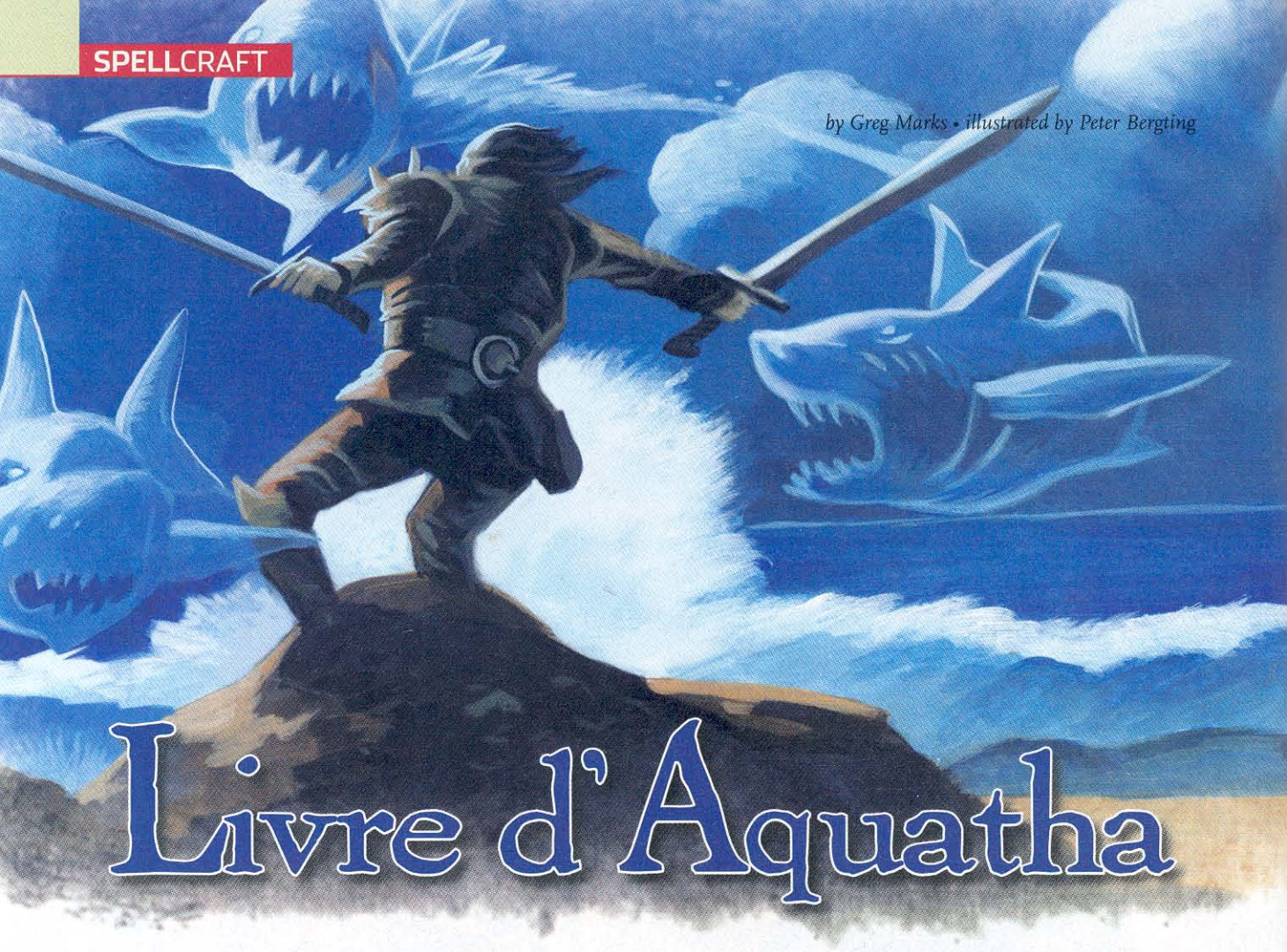
SIGNALLING TRUMPET

These beautiful instruments grant their user the ability to communicate over great distances regardless of nearby sounds (including the din of war). Any user may speak a single word through the horn (as a standard action), which is heard and understood by all creatures the user does not consider an enemy within 100 feet. Enemies of the trumpet's user instead hear a short and meaningless blast on the trumpet.

In the hands of a character with ranks in Perform (wind instruments), however, the *signalling trumpet* grants additional powers. Such a user can speak one word per rank in Perform (wind instruments), and his trumpeting can be heard to a distance of 1/4 mile (1,320 feet) per 5 ranks. Once again, those whom the trumpeter considers enemies hear only several meaningless trumpet blasts. Issuing a message from a *signalling trumpet* requires a standard action.

Strong illusion; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *ghost sound, whispering wind;* Price 5,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

by Greg Marks • illustrated by Peter Bergting



Livre d'Aquatha

Sailors often say the ocean waves whisper countless tales and hide boundless secrets, but they rarely mention legends of the one tome that attempts to catalog all of these mysteries: the *Livre d'Aquatha*.

Bristling with brine and alive with barnacles and seaweed, only a simple rune on its cover marks the *Livre d'Aquatha* as something more than debris salvaged from some ancient undersea wreck. Passed down from ship's captain to first mate for over a century, the tome holds powerful spells buried among stories of dozens of sailors recorded with detailed sea charts and logs of distant lands and fascinating travels. Even without the spells contained within the *Livre d'Aquatha* carries a significant value, but it is for these rare arcane formulas and not it's monetary value that seafaring spellcasters have hunted for the tome since it was first penned.

Curse of Spilt Water

Transmutation [Water]
Level: Drd 6, Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The target of this spell must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or be permanently transformed into water equal to its original volume. The water immediately splashes to the ground and spreads as normal water. If a suitable container is within 5 feet of the target, the caster can direct the water to collapse into the container. Any equipment carried by the victim also transforms into water. While transformed into water, the victim has no consciousness and can take no actions.

If any quantity of the water is recovered, a *break enchantment* can restore the victim to normal. However, if the water is allowed to evaporate (a process that requires 1 hour for a creature of Fine size, 1 day for Tiny creature, and 2 days for each size category larger than Tiny) or mixed with a larger body of water, such as a lake or sea, a *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* is required to restore the target to its original form.

Material Component: A rag doll soaked in seawater.

Float

Transmutation
Level: Clr 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Willing creature or object touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Upon casting this spell you magically support a willing target or object in water or similar liquid, buoying it to the surface. If cast on a creature, the target gains a +5 bonus on Swim checks and does not go underwater if he fails a Swim check by 5 or more. However, the target cannot swim underwater for the duration of this spell. If cast on an unattended object, that item bobs to the surface. You can affect one item weighing no more than 50 pounds plus 100 pounds per level. Objects that weigh more than the maximum weight you can affect are unaffected by this spell.

Geyser

Evocation [Water]
Level: Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell creates a ray of water that blasts toward one target that you designate. If you successfully hit with a ranged touch attack, the watery jet deals 2d6 points of non-lethal damage, +1d6 per two caster levels (dealing 5d6 damage at 6th level, 6d6 at 8th, and so on) up to a maximum of 8d6 damage at 12th level. In addition, those struck by this spell must save or be knocked prone. *Geyser* deals no damage to objects or those creatures immune to nonlethal damage.

Lash of the Kraken

Transmutation
Level: Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level

This spell transforms one of your appendages into a lashing, barb-covered tentacle like that of a kraken. This rubbery appendage gives you reach and deals damage as indicated on the following chart. As a primary attack, the tentacle adds your Strength modifier to damage. The tentacle can also be used as a secondary natural attack in conjunction with a manufactured weapon. Such secondary attacks do not interfere with your primary attack as attacking with an off-hand weapon would, but you take the usual –5 penalty for the tentacle attack when used as a secondary natural attack.

If you hit with this tentacle attack, you may attempt a grapple check against your opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. If you succeed at the grapple attempt, you immediately constrict the foe and deal automatic tentacle damage as if you had hit the target again. Each round you maintain a grapple you automatically deal tentacle damage to your foe. A constricted enemy is grappled as normal and may escape by making a successful grapple check on its turn.

A creature with a natural tentacle attack may use its own tentacle damage or that granted by the spell, whichever is greater. It gains the ability to grab and constrict with all of its tentacle attacks if it could not already.

Size	Damage	Reach
Fine	1	0 ft.
Diminutive	1	0 ft.
Tiny	1d3	5 ft.
Small	1d4	5 ft.
Medium	1d6	10 ft.
Large	1d8	15 ft.
Huge	2d6	20 ft.
Gargantuan	2d8	40 ft.
Colossal	4d6	60 ft.

Scyllan Scream

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting, Sonic]
Level: Brd 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Area: 100-ft.-radius emanation centered on you
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Upon casting this spell, you issue forth a terrible wail exactly like the screeching of a fierce scyllan (see *Stormwrack* for more on these myth-spawned outsiders). All creatures within 100 feet that hear this noise must make a Will save, with those that save being unaffected by the spell. Creatures with 4 or fewer HD that fail this save become panicked for 2d6 rounds, while those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 2d6 rounds.

MYSTERIES OF THE DEEP

Those who trust tales passed between dockhands and old salts might hear stories of the *Livre d'Aquatha* rumored to date back thousands of years. In truth, however, none really know the origins of the tome.

One legend of the *Livre d'Aquatha* traces its creation back to the captain's quarters of the notorious pirate-mage Eves "Squideye" Riddlebone, although his name appears nowhere within the tome's text. Another rumor claims that the spells within are holy teachings scribed by a priestess of Persana—the god of tritons—written upon the empty pages of her lost lover's journal. Alternatively, a variation of that tale claims that the spells within are in fact creations of the foul deity Panzuriel (see page 63 of this issue) and that his cult, and their many-armed masters, seek it out to this day.

Given the transient nature of most sea-going owners, the *Livre d'Aquatha* might appear in the possession of any ship's captain or high-ranking mate worthy of such a tome. There are some who say the *Livre d'Aquatha* has long been lost, citing famous ghost ships, cursed sargasso islands, or mythical sunken cities as likely resting places. More recent reports, however, cite the *St. Asmod's Hope* as the tome's location, a relatively new but already notorious shipwreck said to by haunted by swimming fiends.

NEW SPELLS WITHIN THE LIVRE D'AQUATHA

The *Livre d'Aquatha* contains many unique spells, as well as those found in the *Player's Handbook* involving the creation and destruction of water and that assist in travel on or below the seas. Besides the various spells and arcane formulae, the numerous reports, sketches, and maps within this tome are detailed enough to grant anyone who references it a +2 circumstance bonus on both Profession (sailor) checks and Knowledge (geography) checks related to the sea and costal lands.

Those interested in further expanding their repertoire of water-related magic or who wish to add more spells to the pages of the *Livre d'Aquatha* should consider the numerous spells presented in the newly released *Stormwrack*.

BARD SPELLS

5th-Level Bard Spell

Scyllan Scream: Scream panics or shakes those who hear it.

CLERIC SPELLS

1st-Level Cleric Spell

Float: Makes a willing creature or object buoyant.

4th-Level Cleric Spell

Shark Bolt: Summons sharks made of water to attack your enemies.

DRUID SPELLS

3rd-Level Druid Spells

Geyser: Creates a line of water that deals 1d6 nonlethal damage +1d6/2 additional levels.

Lash of the Kraken: Transforms the target's arm into a constricting tentacle.

6th-Level Druid Spell

Curse of Spilt Water: Transforms an enemy into water.

SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

1st-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Float: Makes a willing creature or object buoyant.

2nd-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

Geyser: Creates a line of water that deals 1d6 nonlethal damage +1d6/2 additional levels.

3rd-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Lash of the Kraken: Transforms the target's arm into a constricting tentacle.

Shark Bolt: Summons sharks made of water to attack your enemies.

6th-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Curse of Spilt Water: Transforms an enemy into water.

The creatures known as scyllans are immune to this spell.

Shark Bolt

Conjuration (Creation) [Water]
Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: 1 to 4 shark-shaped bolts of water
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell creates one or more bolts of water, each the size and shape of a Small shark, that spring into existence and attack opponents within range as directed. The number of bolts created depends on your caster level. You create one bolt plus an additional bolt per five caster levels (two at 10th level, three at 15th, and the maximum of four bolts at 20th level). Each bolt deals 1d6 points of damage per hit, +1 point per three caster levels (maximum +6 at 18th level). The bolts strike the opponents you designate, starting with one attack in the round the spell is cast and continuing each round thereafter on your turn. Each uses your highest base attack bonus and attacks only once per round. The bolts always strike from your direction. They do not get flanking bonuses or help combatants get them. Your feats or combat actions do not affect *shark bolts*. If the bolts go beyond the spell range or go out of your sight they return to you and hover.

Each round after the first, you can spend a move action to redirect all of your *shark bolts* to new targets. If you do not, the bolts continue to attack the previous round's target. A bolt may attack on a round it switches targets if the new target is within 30 feet of its previous target.

Shark bolts cannot be attacked or harmed by physical attacks, but they are destroyed by any spell that dispels magic or destroys water. In addition, *shark bolts* within the area of effect of a spell with the fire descriptor (such as *fireball*) are also dispelled. A bolt's AC against touch attacks is 11 (10 + size bonus for Small object).

If a creature attacked by a *shark bolt* has spell resistance, you make a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against that spell resistance whenever a bolt strikes it. If a bolt is successfully resisted, it is dispelled. This dispels only the bolt attacking the creature and not the entire spell if multiple bolts are in existence.

Material Component: One shark's tooth for every bolt called into existence.

by Andy Collins
illustrated by Niklas Janssen

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

This month, the Sage delves into the mysteries of the mind—specifically, questions relating to the adjudication of psionics. You can email the Sage your questions at **sageadvice@paizo.com**.

In the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, nearly every mention of ectoplasm says that it reaches into the Ethereal Plane and affects incorporeal creatures. The *astral construct* power (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 77) creates a construct made of ectoplasm. Does that mean that an astral construct doesn't suffer the normal miss chance when attacking an incorporeal creature?

The Sage must take issue with your opening assertion. After checking all references to ectoplasm in *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, the Sage confirmed that not one of these states anything about the substance affecting incorporeal creatures. The *ectoplasmic cocoon* power states that it extends into the Ethereal Plane, but this is a property of the power, not of ectoplasm in general (and the power says nothing about it affecting incorporeal creatures).

Ectoplasm is not the same thing as force. Neither ectoplasm nor objects or effects created by or from ectoplasm have any particular special properties (other than being affected by the *dismiss ectoplasm* power).

The *control body* power (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 86) says that you can control any humanoid, including undead and outsiders with a humanoid physiology. How far does a "humanoid physiology" extend? What about a balor (a humanoid-shaped creature with wings), a glabrezu (which has extra arms), or a salamander (which has a tail instead of legs)? Is there something official about what counts as "humanoid physiology" or is it a DM ruling?

There's no official definition of humanoid physiology. This is one of those places where common sense and DM judgment must rule the day. The Sage advises that "humanoid physiology" should reasonably include any creature whose body is shaped like a humanoid (upright, probably bipedal creature) and includes all the basic parts of a humanoid (legs, arms, a torso, a head). Extra parts—such as wings, a tail, a pair of extra arms, or even an extra head—shouldn't push the creature out of this category. The Sage would even allow some leeway in the area of legs, since both the centaur (with its horselike body and four legs) and the halfblood yuan-ti (which might have a snake's tail instead of legs) are considered "monstrous" humanoids.

When in doubt, look at the creature's descriptive text—if it's described as having a humanoid form, it's probably reasonable to consider it as having humanoid physiology. Ultimately, there's nothing wrong with the DM being overly lenient in his rulings on this topic.

Among the outsiders in the *Monster Manual*, the Sage would consider the following to be of humanoid physiology: angel (astral deva, planetar, solar), most archons (hound archon, trumpet archon), azer, barghest (in goblin form only), most demons (babau, balor, dretch, glabrezu, hezrou, marilith, nalfeshnee, quasit, succubus, vrock), most devils (barbed devil, bearded devil, bone devil, chain devil, erinyes, horned devil, ice devil, imp, pit fiend), eladrins (bralani, ghaele), genies (djinn, efreet, jann), lillend, mephit, night hag, planetouched (aasimar, tiefling), rakshasa, salamander, slaad, titan, triton, and xill.

Virtually all the undead in the *Monster Manual* have "humanoid physiology." Only the nightcrawler, nightwing, and any skeleton or zombie created from a creature without a humanoid physiology would seem to be exceptions.

Does damage reduction help against powers that deal slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage, such as *crystal shard* (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 89)?

Spells (and powers), spell-like abilities, and energy attacks ignore damage reduction (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 292). Thus, even if a spell or power describes its damage as bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing, it is still a spell (or power) effect, and thus damage reduction does not apply (unless the spell or power's description specifically states otherwise).

What exactly counts as a "purely mental" action, such as those allowed to the second mind created by the *schism* power (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 130)? Does a silent, still spell count? What about a spell-like ability or a quickened spell?

The *schism* power specifically includes manifesting a power as an

example of a purely mental action. Elsewhere in *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, this is expanded to include "casting spells with no verbal, somatic, or material components." Thus, a silent, still spell wouldn't count unless the spell also had no material components (including focuses).

A spell-like ability is essentially a spell without verbal, somatic, or material components (and is described on page 180 of the *Player's Handbook* as being activated "mentally"), so that qualifies as purely mental. This would also include psi-like abilities.

Although a quickened spell doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, it still includes any verbal, somatic, or material components required by the non-quickened version of the spell, and thus doesn't automatically qualify as a "purely mental" action by virtue of its speed.

The Sage can think of a few other actions that fall into the category of "purely mental" actions:

- Communicating with *telepathy*.
- Concentrating to maintain a spell.
- Dismissing a spell.
- Directing or redirecting an active spell.
- Lowering spell resistance.
- Making a Knowledge check (assuming you aren't consulting a text or other resource). Some other skill checks might be allowed at the DM's option (such as a Spellcraft check made to identify a spell effect), but only if the check can be made without any movement on the character's part.

When in doubt, the DM should use common sense and a pretty literal definition of "purely mental" to determine if something fits the bill. If the action requires any physical movement whatsoever (including speech), it shouldn't qualify.

If I am affected by a condition (such as being stunned) while *schism* (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 130) is manifested, is the second mind also affected by the condition?

Yes. *Schism* allows you to attempt a second save against a charm or compulsion effect, but the benefit doesn't go any further than that. A stunned character with a second mind is just as stunned as one without a second mind, and the second mind can't take any actions either.

One notable exception is paralysis, which specifically points out that "purely mental actions" (see previous question) are still allowed, which means that your second mind could act normally (and your primary mind could still use purely mental actions as well, of course).

Does the immunity to psionics special quality of a psion-killer (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 208) also render it immune to spells?

Yes. According to the psionics-magic transparency rule (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 55), spells and psionics are treated as equivalent for adjudicating most effects. This includes both immunity to psionics (which means the psion-killer is immune to spells that allow spell resistance) and immunity to magic (which means that golems are immune to powers that allow power resistance).

Attempting to create a psion-killer (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 208) requires the creator

to manifest—among other powers—both *fabricate*, a shaper-only power, and *mind seed*, a telepath-only power. Since a psion can focus on only one discipline and cannot use a device with discipline-only powers from other disciplines, how is a psion or any other psionic character supposed to create these creatures? While the Expanded Knowledge feat allows access to these powers, creating a psionic golem already requires at least three other feats (Craft Psionic Arms and Armor, Craft Universal Item, Craft Psionic Construct), and a fourth feat seems a bit much.

As page 282 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* points out, while the prerequisites for a magic item must be met for it to be created, "access through another magic item *or spellcaster* is allowed [italics added]." Although it is a creature, a psion-killer is created just like a magic item (or a golem). Thus, multiple characters could work together to create a psion-killer, with one supplying *fabricate* and the other *mind seed*.

If, during my move, my character falls down a shaft (or cliff, or whatever), can he continue to move with the same move action when he hits the bottom (assuming he survives)? What if he uses the *catfall* power (*Expanded Psionics Handbook*, page 82)? What about if he has a *feather fall* effect?

The simple answer is no—falling takes at least some time, and in most cases ends up with the character no longer standing up. Together, these issues result in the character's move action "ending" with the fall.

A DM willing to take on some judgment calls, however, can be a little open-minded on the issue. Assuming the character lands on his feet, and the fall was short enough to not take an appreciable amount of time (say, no more than a second or so), it might well seem reasonable to allow him to continue moving as part of the same action. The rest of this answer will tackle these two requirements in reverse order.

As the Sage has pointed out in the past (see *Dragon* #327), falling happens very quickly. In a single second, the typical character falls 16 feet; after 2 seconds, you've fallen 64 feet. It's probably okay to let a character who falls up to 20 feet or so to continue moving as part of the same action (assuming he remains standing at the end of the drop).

Feather fall says that the character falls 60 feet per round, or 10 feet per second. The Sage suggests that any *feather fall*-aided drop of more than 10 feet is too slow to allow continued movement with the same action. (*Catfall* doesn't reduce falling speed, so it wouldn't have the same restriction.)

Obviously, if the character has to stand up after the fall, his movement has ended and he must take a new move action to move again. This is true even if he can stand up as a free action (since you can't typically take free actions in the middle of a move). In general, characters don't land on their feet after falling; however, the Sage could see some reasonable exceptions:

- A character who jumps down intentionally and takes no damage because of a successful Jump check (see the Jump skill).
- A character who jumps or falls down and takes no damage because of a successful Tumble check (see the Tumble skill).
- A character with the slow fall ability (such as a monk) who takes no damage from a fall because of this ability.
- A character under the effect of *feather fall* or similar effect that negates falling damage.
- A character who uses the *catfall* power. This one is clear, as the power specifically states that the character lands on his feet no matter how far he falls.

Basically, if the character has some ability that negates the damage from the fall, it's probably okay to say that she also lands on her feet; assuming the fall was brief enough, she should be able to keep moving as part of the same action that took her off the edge.

Dragon

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by Richard Farrese

COUNCIL OF ELDERS

BARBARIAN

Throughout the ages great chieftains and other influential leaders have seized power, led their people to battle, and created vast empires. In the traditions of almost all ancient humanoid tribes a council of elders, whose members possessed both wisdom and knowledge, guided these important figures. Members of these councils offered advice and took part in all major decisions.

MEMBERSHIP

Only a few selected individuals can hope to gain a position on a council of elders. A candidate must meet several requirements, including membership in the tribe. Although most elders are born and raised within the tribes they serve, some outsiders are adopted because of services they have rendered on behalf of the tribe. While not all elders were great heroes in their youths, most actively involved themselves in the defense of their people. Old barbarians make up the majority of this group, but some tribes count venerable adepts, druids, or sorcerers among their council of elders. Joining a council of elders comes by invitation alone, and only those of the council can appoint new members.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The council of elders provides the leaders of its tribe with good counsel, ensuring that those who lead the tribe take deliberate and wise actions to ensure the tribe's survival. Each council of elders is active among its tribe. It provides a voice for the people and often has a say in the decision-making process, effectively influencing the tribal chieftain and his most important lieutenants. While most councils of elders do not take direct roles in the governance of their tribes, they are sometimes called to temporarily replace a fallen chieftain or asked to select a new leader in the name of their people. In rare instances, a humanoid tribe might rely upon such a council to lead it. In these cases, the council of elders can replace the despotism of a single chieftain or oligarchy of elite warriors with a form of democracy in which any officially recognized adult tribe member participates in governing.

NEW FEATS

A character selecting one of these feats need not have levels in barbarian, but a specific group of people that holds barbarians in high esteem must recognize the character's wisdom.

Recognized Elder [General]

Your people highly respect your opinion and seek out your wisdom.

Prerequisites: Leadership, membership in a tribe, old age.

Benefit: Diplomacy and Knowledge (history) are class skills for you, and you receive a +1 bonus on Diplomacy and Knowledge (history) checks. In addition, you may gain a cohort with levels in barbarian as if your Leadership score were 1 higher.

Venerable Elder [General]

Your tribe considers you among the wisest and most knowledgeable people alive.

Prerequisites: Leadership, Recognized Elder, Wise Elder, membership in a tribe, venerable age.

Benefit: Once per day, you may gain a +10 insight bonus on any Diplomacy or Intimidate check. You must declare your intent to use this ability before rolling the check. You may also gain a cohort with levels in barbarian as if your Leadership score were 4 higher (this replaces and does not stack with the bonus from Recognized Elder or Wise Elder).

Wise Elder [General]

Your tribe recognizes the assets of your great wisdom and knowledge.

Prerequisites: Leadership, Recognized Elder, membership in a tribe, old age.

Benefit: Once per day, you may reroll a Diplomacy or Intimidate check made to influence a member of your tribe. You must take the result of the second roll even if worse than the original. You may also gain a cohort with levels in barbarian as if your Leadership score were 2 higher (this replaces and does not stack with the bonus from Recognized Elder).

by John E. Ling, Jr.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Bardic colleges of all types appear throughout the world, each focusing on a different curriculum for the student body. Bards who opt to attend one of these special academies often find themselves at a slight advantage in certain areas of expertise and at a slight disadvantage in others. Oftentimes, alumni go out of their way to assist their brethren and just as frequently meddle in the affairs of a graduate from a rival school or organization. The benefits provided by the choice of school is only partially offset by its penalty, therefore use of the optional benefits and penalties of these schools requires your DM's approval.

"Where Did You Go To College?" in *Dragon* #332 introduced four different bardic colleges and organizations. This article introduces four more.

THE GYPSY NETWORK

These vagabonds roam the land, moving from city to city, often barely one step ahead of the law. New members join through various means, most commonly as the offspring of existing members or as young runaways looking to make new lives for themselves. Gypsies work in concert with one another: While some perform elaborate dance routines that mesmerize crowds others move through the audience lifting unsecured items from the pockets of unsuspecting victims.

Gypsies are famous for their dancing and thievery, receiving a +1 bonus on Perform (dance) and Sleight of Hand checks. Education takes a back seat to practicality, however, and all gypsies treat Knowledge (nobility and royalty) and Spellcraft as cross-class skills.

MOUNTAINTOP UNIVERSITY

Situated among snowy peaks sits this quaint college. Bards attending Mountaintop University live a rugged life while learning a variety of subjects both mundane and magical. The graduation ritual requires the students to set off into the wilderness in groups of three and survive off the land for a week before returning to the campus for a feast and celebration marked by master performances from both students and faculty.

Graduates of Mountaintop University are athletic individuals, receiving a +1 bonus on Balance and Climb checks. The rugged and sometimes dangerous lifestyle puts a rough edge on the college's graduates, who treat Gather Information and Knowledge (local) as cross-class skills.

THE ROYAL SCEPTERS

Members of this highly secretive group of spies train from an early age in the art of espionage. The school's masters select children from among the kingdom's orphanages, and a student rarely knows more than two others. Instructors teach pupils to use their bardic talents to join a noble's entourage at court. Gaining access to a noble's private home is a high priority for students and is often seen as a prerequisite of "graduation."

Spies within this network receive a +1 bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks. They work their subterfuge out in the open, however, and so count Escape Artist and Hide as cross-class skills.

THE WIND DANCERS

Deep in the forest among the tallest trees known in the world, the bards called Wind Dancers spend many decades both in quiet contemplation and learning to play their wind instruments. Few races other than elves have the patience (or lifespans) necessary to master the school's teachings. Kings and nobles around the world invite Wind Dancers to perform haunting melodies on their flutes, panpipes, and other wind instruments.

Wind Dancer graduates have spent a long time among the trees, learning to reproduce the sound of the wind blowing through the leaves. They receive a +1 bonus on Knowledge (nature) and Perform (wind instrument) checks. They rarely deign to travel outside their forest though, and so count Knowledge (geography) and Sense Motive as cross-class skills.

by Jason Nelson

VARIANT TURNING

CLERIC

One of the most useful class abilities in the game is the cleric's ability to turn undead. Aside from humanoids or maybe outsiders, undead are one of the most common adversaries PCs face in their careers. Worse, they possess resistances and immunities to many of an adventuring party's tricks—critical hits, sneak attacks, mind-affecting spells, and even poison. Turn undead, however, allows no saving throw, spell resistance, or attacks of opportunity, and it selectively affects only your undead foes.

Unfortunately, the effects you can create with undead turning are somewhat limited: the affected undead run away, cower (if unable to escape), or disintegrate. Destroying undead is not bad, but making them run away often just makes more trouble. If you seek something else to do with undead, the following feats significantly expand or alter the turn undead ability.

AURA OF LIFE ENERGY [DIVINE]

You can produce a blast of energy that wreaks havoc on undead.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (religion) 7 ranks, ability to turn undead.

Benefit: You can spend a turn attempt as a standard action to create a 20-foot-radius burst of positive energy centered on you. All undead caught within the burst take 1d8 points of damage +1 point of damage per two cleric levels. This is a positive energy effect although it does not heal living creatures.

CORONA [DIVINE]

By channeling positive energy you can blast your foes with holy light.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, ability to turn undead.

Benefit: You can spend a turn attempt as a standard action to create a flash of light that blasts forth into a 20-foot-radius burst centered on you. Undead creatures in the area that are susceptible to sunlight (such as bodaks, vampires, and wraiths) become frightened for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Charisma modifier).

HAUNTING WEAPONS [DIVINE]

You have learned the secrets of imbuing weapons with the ability to affect restless spirits.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 4 ranks, ability to turn or rebuke undead.

Benefit: You can spend a turn or rebuke attempt as a standard action to grant the melee weapons (including natural weapons) of all allies (including yourself) within a 30-foot burst the ghost touch special ability. Such weapons count as either corporeal or incorporeal at any given time, whichever is more beneficial to the wielder. The effect lasts until the end of your next turn.

HOLY CALLING [DIVINE]

You are able to channel divinely infused life energy that calls to the endless hunger of the undead like a siren's song.

Prerequisites: Cha 15, ability to turn undead.

Benefit: As a standard action you may use a turn or rebuke attempt to goad an undead opponent within 60 feet that has line of effect to you. The goaded undead must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 your character level + your Charisma modifier). If the undead fails its save, you are the only creature it can attack for 1d4 rounds. If it kills you, knocks you unconscious, loses sight of you, or otherwise is unable to make attacks against you, it may make any remaining attacks against other foes, as normal. The undead attacks you in the most efficient way possible, whether through melee or ranged attacks, spells, or other abilities. It may cast spells that affect an area as long as you are within the spell's area. The undead may continue to use appropriate tactics, avoiding attacks of opportunity and the like, but it can only attack you regardless of the actions of your allies.

by John E. Ling, Jr.

ANIMAL ACCESSORIES

An animal is a special ally for your character. It can fill many important roles: scout, guard, tracker. It's only natural that any character wants the best for an animal friend, and that's where special equipment can help.

Claw Extenders: Claw extenders strap to an animal's forelegs and extend about an inch beyond its natural claws. Strapping on the extenders requires 1 minute. An animal with the attack trick is proficient with claw extenders, while one that doesn't know that trick suffers the –4 penalty for nonproficiency. An animal wearing claw extenders deals +1 point of extra damage when making a claw attack (rake attacks do not deal extra damage, as claw extenders only fit over the front claws). Claw extenders only fit animals of the size they were made for and cannot be strapped on to a larger or smaller animal. They can be made of special materials (such as cold iron or adamantine) or be of masterwork quality (and therefore made into magic weapons) like any other weapon, with the normal additional costs.

Climbing Harness: Many animals cannot climb steep slopes or use a rope. This harness, actually composed of two separate sets of straps attached by a rope, allows your character to pull up an animal using a rope. One end of the climbing harness supports the animal's weight at its hips and chest and requires 1 minute to put on. The other part of the harness distributes the animal's weight evenly across the character's chest and shoulders, allowing her to climb and lift the animal safely. While using the harness, the animal's weight (and any gear the animal is wearing or carrying) counts against the character's maximum weight. Teaching an animal to accept a climbing harness requires the stay trick.

Grooming Kit: This simple kit contains various brushes, combs, and sundry items used to groom an animal. Most often, the kind of animal (feline, canine, bird, and so on) determines exactly what is contained within a grooming kit.

Muzzle, False: At a glance a false muzzle appears exactly like a normal muzzle (as presented on page 22 of the *Arms and Equipment Guide*). A DC 20 Search check reveals the truth, however. When trained, an animal can remove a false muzzle on its own as a move action. The perform trick teaches the animal how to remove the false muzzle on its own. False muzzles always cost the same, regardless of the animal's size for which they were made.

Scent Blocker: Rubbing this mixture of herbs into the fur, feathers, or skin of an animal masks its scent for 24 hours, which soothes skittish domestic animals when near a treated predator. A single application of this mixture is large enough to cover one Medium, four Small, or sixteen Tiny or smaller animals. Applying scent blocker requires 1 minute per animal treated.

Training Treats: These small treats come in a variety of flavors. Trainers use them to assist in the training of an animal. When used consistently as a reward system while teaching an animal a new trick, training treats add a +2 circumstance bonus on your Handle Animal check. Treats regularly come in wax paper-lined boxes, and an entire box must be used over the course of the animal's training in order to gain the bonus.

Item	Cost	Weight	Handle Animal DC*
Claw Extenders	20 gp	1 lb.	15 (attack trick)
Climbing Harness	7 gp	1 lb.	15 (stay trick)
Grooming Kit	15 gp	3 lb.	—
Muzzle, False	20 gp	1 lb.	15 (perform trick)
Scent Blocker	50 gp	1/2 lb.	—
Training Treats	30 gp	2 lb.	—

* This is the DC to train the animal to use the item (and the trick it needs to learn).

by Peter von Bleichert

THE JANISSARY

FIGHTER

Created circa 1330 CE, the conscripted troops of the Ottoman army, called janissaries, operated under the system of *devshirme* (dev-shuhr-MEH). In this system, children of subjects (most often Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians) were taken from their families, raised as warriors, and indoctrinated into the culture and religion of those they served. Subject to strict rules and limited freedoms, the fierce and loyal janissaries held the highest moral standards and often practiced celibacy to enhance martial focus. Musically inclined, their heavy, intimidating tunes accompanied them into combat.

The emperor Murad I created the janissaries to replace the empire's fragmented tribal army with a loyal force. However, the group's power to influence events and defend their own interests led to a virtual state within a state and the eventual involvement of the janissary corps in coups against the empire.

CREATING A JANISSARY

The janissary is an alternative fighter class, and must be approved by your DM.

Janissaries are usually lawful and most often neutral, but their order accepts all alignments.

Janissaries worship the deities of those they serve and often recognize their mortal lords as divine inhabitants of the Material Plane. The indoctrination of *devshirme* overcomes any racial differences between a janissary and its master. A human janissary could serve a half-orc without question and vice versa.

Learned and skilled in arts beyond those martial, janissaries know more of the world than most other fighters and speak of such things as architecture and historical events—often doing so in strange tongues. A janissary gains Speak Language and two Knowledge skills (of his choice) as class skills, but Handle Animal, Intimidate, and Swim become cross-class skills for him.

Feats appropriate to janissaries include Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Sunder (janissaries often sunder weapons and shields or attempt to disarm their foes with their first attacks), and some of the new feats from *Heroes of Battle* (such as Veteran Knowledge). Pious good-aligned janissaries sometimes take exalted feats (from *Book of Exalted Deeds*), especially Vow of Chastity and Vow of Obedience. In addition, janissaries have developed certain methods for which they have become famous,as modeled by the new feat Combat Engineer.

Fiercely loyal, janissaries possess a single-mindedness in combat rightly feared by their opponents. They tend to forgo heavy armor for greater stealth and speed, while preferring heavy blades like the greatsword.

PLAYING A JANISSARY

A janissary wears his equipment proudly and sees maintaining it as an integral part of his military existence. Stoic and serious, it takes much to make a janissary smile. He spends down time sharpening blades or brushing up on a language or other skill. He willingly wears symbols of servitude such as tattoos or the colors of a lord or unit. Janissaries keep their hair shaved down to stubble for ease of care in the field, and they emphasize hygiene in general.

The *devshirme* system thoroughly conditions the minds of those who survive it, although if improperly performed it can haunt a janissary with the desire to learn his identity and origins. He might stumble in combat when confronted by memories or symbols of his childhood, before the *devshirme*, and question conditioned loyalties. This might be an inconvenience, a reason for seeking new adventure and alliances, or a dangerous character flaw.

COMBAT ENGINEER [GENERAL]

You can pinpoint weaknesses in materials, helping you destroy them.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Int 13, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) 4 ranks, Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on attack and damage rolls when making a sunder attack. When attacking an unattended inanimate object, wall, or structure you can ignore up to 10 points of hardness.

Special: A fighter may select Combat Engineer as one of his fighter bonus feats.

by Ryan Zielonka

WORLDLY STYLES

The unarmed strike of a monk sometimes fails to capture the wild, kinetic energy of hand-to-hand combat. Page 52 of *Unearthed Arcana* presents new fighting styles to better represent the varied styles seen both in real life and in martial arts movies. In exchange for the freedom to choose her bonus feats, a monk who takes a specific style gains a +2 bonus on a specific skill and at 6th level can gain an additional ability if she meets the prerequisites (she must meet the prerequisites at 6th level to gain this ability).

KYOKUSHINKAI KARATE

Kyokushinkai karate, or the "School of Ultimate Truth," is an aggressive Japanese form of martial arts characterized by its highly offensive nature and emphasis on intense conditioning. *Kyokushinkai* practitioners perform a variety of brutal body hardening exercises during training to callus their bodies in preparation for martial combat. Stylistically, monks who practice *kyokushinkai* distinguish themselves from other linear martial arts forms in their use of circular movements when executing strikes.

In combat, a student of *kyokushinkai* engages the enemy purposefully, without hesitation. She makes few extemporaneous movements. The monk launches into an unyielding maelstrom of vicious kicks and punches, seeking to knockout or incapacitate her opponent as quickly as possible.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Survival
1st-Level Feat: Endurance
2nd-Level Feat: Toughness
6th-Level Feat: Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)
6th-Level Bonus Ability: You permanently gain 6 hit points. *Prerequisites:* Concentration 9 ranks, Die Hard.

WING CHUN KUEN

Wing chun kuen (sometimes referred to as *wing chun gung fu*), or "sticking hands," is an intricate martial art best described as a southern Chinese boxing style. Students develop their hand speed, counter-punching, and trapping abilities on wooden dummies and through blindfolded exercises. Practitioners utilize a variety of simple, deceptively effective techniques (such as the one-inch punch popularized by Bruce Lee) to incapacitate their opponents.

In combat, a monk who practices *wing chun kuen* advocates engaging opponents at close range, then adapting to the attacks of an opponent. Perfectly timed counterstrikes, rapid straight punches, and precise footwork all define the art.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Listen
1st-Level Feat: Combat Reflexes
2nd-Level Feat: Cleave
6th-Level Feat: Improved Critical (unarmed strike)
6th-Level Bonus Ability: When you enter combat and aren't surprised, you gain a bonus on your initiative equal to your Wisdom bonus (if any). *Prerequisites:* Listen 9 ranks, Improved Initiative.

WUSHU

Translated as "Chinese Martial Arts" or "the Art of War," *wushu* combines hard kicks and strikes with softer, more indirect methods of self-defense in a highly acrobatic style. The art places emphasis on aesthetics, encouraging fluidity and beauty in the execution of techniques. *Wushu* practitioners are also renown for their athletic ability, speed, and balance. Sometimes mislabeled as kung fu, cinema has popularized this style of martial arts, most notably in the films of Jet Li. Monks of this style can easily adapt their technique to a given opponent or situation.

In combat, a monk who studies *wushu* engages his opponent with tactical precision. The *wushu* stylist uses hit and run tactics to frustrate her adversary and weaken her opponent's resolve. *Wushu* practitioners are characterized by their uncanny mobility. They can blindside their opponents with series of highly acrobatic aerial maneuvers and disorienting attacks.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Tumble
1st-Level Feat: Improved Initiative
2nd-Level Feat: Power Attack
6th-Level Feat: Improved Feint
6th-Level Bonus Ability: When you make a Bluff check in order to feint in combat, you gain a bonus equal to one-half your monk level. *Prerequisites:* Bluff 4 ranks, Sense Motive 9 ranks.

MONK

by Troy E. Taylor

PALADINS OF THE DESERT

PALADIN

The shifting sands and merciless desert sun requires a different sort of holy champion. Consider modeling your next paladin after these historical examples.

ARABIAN KNIGHT

Virtuous warriors from the era of the Arabian Nights were motivated to expand their caliph's empire through trade, as well as protect their riches from rivals.

Mount: While the camel served as a viable option, the Arabs were passionate about the breeding and racing of horses. Most warriors preferred the light, swift Arabian (see the light horse in the *Monster Manual*) as a status symbol and for its proven effectiveness in the arid climate. These horses wore only the lightest armor.

Weapons: Nobles received extensive training in the bastard sword, bow, lance, and scimitar. They also frequently learned falconry (the bird could forage for extra meat for its master while on campaign). Other training included swimming lessons, at least one field of scientific study, and tactics—in the form of chess.

Armor: Light or medium armor and small shields.

Code of Behavior: Knights extolled the virtues of courage, endurance, hospitality, generosity, and respect for women.

EGYPTIAN MARYANNU

The Egyptians adopted the Hittite concept of the *maryannu*—derived from the Sanskrit word meaning "youthful heroes"—for its aristocratic warriors.

Mount: The Egyptian chariot differed from its Near Eastern cousin in its light weight, open back (mounted on an axle with two spoked wheels), and that it was pulled by two horses. The more elaborate models had metal sleeves covering the moving parts. The chariot carried two people for battle. On the uneven, sandy ground of Egypt, the chariot was designed to support the infantry by dashing back and forth across the battlefield, while the *maryannu* fired arrows into pockets of enemy strength.

Weapons: In battle, the driver carried a whip and the ranged attacker a bow, arrows, a reserve quiver, and several short spears. For symbolic reasons, each carried a mace with disk-shaped copper head (–1 on attack and damage rolls). In later periods, the scimitar replaced the mace.

Armor: At best, the *maryannu* wore a thin armor of bronze scales or leather bands. Most did not wish to encumber the fragile yet highly mobile chariots, so they often went without armor and carried only a small shield.

Code of Behavior: Decrees by the Pharaoh were, by definition, divine, lawful, and good. A *maryannu* did nothing to disgrace the Pharaoh, his family, or allies.

SUMERIAN CHARIOTEER

The charioteer was the most specialized professional soldier pledged to a Sumerian *lugal*, the ruler of a city-state in ancient Mesopotamia.

Mount: Sumerians used chariots before the domestication of the horse, so a team of four *onager* (use donkey stats from the *Monster Manual*) pulled a four-wheeled chariot that resembled a small wagon. The chariot held three people: a driver, a shield bearer, and a spear thrower. Designed for durability, the chariot had thick, pegged wooden wheels and a high copper shield and worked best when driven across the arid, flat alluvial plains.

Weapons: The spear was a mainstay for Sumerian warriors, although later charioteers began to use the bow. Wealthy individuals might also carry a bronze short sword (–1 penalty on attack and damage rolls).

Armor: The driver and shield bearer wore the same studded leather cloaks as the infantry. The spear thrower went without armor.

Code of Behavior: Elite warriors such as the charioteer were held to a higher standard under the law, facing more severe punishments than other people for the same crime.

by Hal Maclean

NOWHERE TO HIDE

RANGER

A ranger gets bonuses on damage rolls and on certain skill checks when facing his favored enemies. Yet, what if his favored enemy wears some kind of disguise or has polymorphed or wild shaped? What if the ranger uses variant rules that allow him to take favored enemies based on affiliation, such as those presented in *Unearthed Arcana*? In cases like those, the ranger needs a way to pick his favored enemies out of the crowd.

TELL IT LIKE IT IS

Whether in games like poker or in every day life social situations, all creatures have "tells"—tiny, subliminal quirks that reveal their behavior and intentions. Since people cannot consciously control their tells they prove extraordinarily difficult to conceal. Even the most gifted actor—or assassin—sometimes gives himself away with a tiny gesture or manner of speaking. Rangers train themselves to notice the tells of their favored enemies, and this gives them a chance to pierce even the most perfect disguise or subterfuge.

THE OBSERVER EFFECT

When the DM feels the ranger could not automatically identify his favored enemy, she must secretly make a Spot check on the ranger's behalf to determine if he notices the favored enemy nearby. If this check fails and the ranger himself suspects that a favored enemy might be nearby he may attempt a conscious Spot check. The ranger gains his favored enemy bonus on both types of Spot checks, as normal. If the ranger fails his Spot checks he remains unsure or unaware of the favored enemy's true nature and does not gain his favored enemy bonus on damage.

FOR THE DM

These rules can also apply to creatures or NPCs that smite or otherwise negatively affect certain kinds of targets. Examples might include beholders, who look to target spellcasters with their antimagic eye; celestials, who seek out demons or devils; or chromatic dragons, who attempt to find metallic dragons.

SPOTTING FAVORED ENEMIES

The base DC of the ranger's Spot check depends upon the amount of effort the favored enemy has made to conceal its true nature.

DC 5: No attempt to conceal. Any ranger with the creature as his favored enemy could identify it as such.

DC 15: Giving off clues. The favored enemy makes no effort to hide its nature, which is simply ambiguous for some reason. For example, a ranger who selected wizards as his favored enemy watches someone cast a *fireball* but doesn't know if the person is a wizard, sorcerer, or even just someone utilizing the Use Magic Device skill to cast the spell from a wand or scroll.

DC 25: Going about its daily business. The target is doing something that offers no hints as to its true nature. For example, a ranger who has selected the city's thieves' guild as a favored enemy watches someone in plain clothing eat breakfast in the marketplace and doesn't know she's a new member of the guild.

DC 30: Magical effort to deceive. The target has made a magical attempt to conceal its true nature. For example, a ranger with magical beasts as his favored enemy comes upon an aranea in its human guise, or a ranger with druids as his favored enemy sees an unbridled horse walking through a city with a group of other adventurers.

DC Variable: Conscious effort to deceive. The target uses the Disguise skill or *disguise self* to conceal its true nature. This is a normal Disguise check opposed by the ranger's Spot check.

by Hal Maclean

THAT WHICH DOES NOT KILL, PART II

ROGUE

Most rogues live in the moment. Embracing larceny and reveling in the heady thrill of harrowing escapes, they leave philosophy and reflection to the studious wizard and the pious cleric. They seldom question their good fortune, rarely pausing to wonder how they emerged unscathed from yet another deadly hazard. They take their luck and their charmed lives as their due. Sometimes, though, even the most devil-may-care rogue comes face to face with her mortality and finds herself unable to turn away. When providence spares a rogue one too many times she feels compelled to root out the secret of her survival, plumbing the depths of her soul and discovering hidden strengths and unknown talents along the way. Rogues can take these abilities in place of one of the special abilities outlined on page 50 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Check out DRAGON #332 for the first part of this two-part series.

Adrenaline Rush (Ex): *Prerequisite:* Must have succeeded at a Fortitude save to avoid death due to massive damage.

Brought to the brink of death by massive trauma the rogue somehow survived. As a result, she developed a talent for pushing her body beyond its normal limits. Once per day, the rogue may choose to treat a Strength-based skill check as if she had rolled a natural 20. The rogue must declare she is using this ability before the die roll, thereby negating the necessity of the check.

Cartilaginous Skeleton (Ex): *Prerequisite:* Must have been reduced to fewer than 0 hit points by bludgeoning damage or a crushing attack.

The rogue's shattered bones knit back together under a sheath of flexible cartilage, allowing her to contort herself in remarkable ways. The rogue gains a +4 bonus on Escape Artist checks and an additional +2 bonus when attempting to escape a grapple. Further, if subject to a grapple she may make an attack of opportunity against the grappling opponent even if it has the Improved Grapple feat or the improved grab special attack.

Enriched Bone Marrow (Ex): *Prerequisite:* Constitution must have been reduced below 3 by blood-draining attacks.

The rogue's recovery from near-fatal blood loss left her better able to recuperate from physical disability. Each day in which the rogue attempts to recover ability damage to her Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution, she may attempt a Fortitude save (DC 15 + current amount of ability damage) to recover an extra point of ability damage.

Happier Days (Ex): *Prerequisite:* Must have made a saving throw to resist a death effect.

At the moment of crisis the rogue's life did indeed pass before her eyes, and now she may draw upon memories of better times to sustain her when enemies assault her psyche. Once per day, if the rogue must attempt a Will save she may instead choose to cast her mind adrift among her memories rather then suffer the effects of a possible failed save. She must decide to use this ability before she attempts the Will save, negating the need for the saving throw. While lost in her memories she is oblivious to her surroundings and becomes helpless. Each round, at the end of her turn, the rogue may attempt to pull her thoughts back to the present attempting a Will save (at the same DC of the original Will save). For each round she fails this save she remains helpless.

Rainbow Stare (Su): *Prerequisite:* Must have survived passing through at least four layers of either a *prismatic sphere* or a *prismatic wall*.

Somehow, while enduring a nearly overwhelming array of colors and light the rogue learned how to screen out dangerous images. She gains a +2 bonus on saving throws against figments and glamers and is completely immune to patterns.

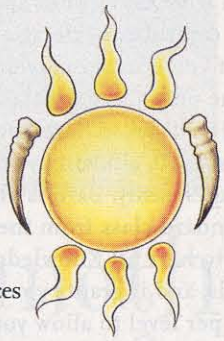
by Troy E. Taylor • illustrated by Mike Schley

THE BRONZE SOLARIS

Members of the Order of the Bronze Solaris are unique among sorcerers. Those who come out of this tradition are never alone during their lives' journeys. Unlike the majority of sorcerers who must find their paths through trial and error, the sorcerers of the Bronze Solaris benefit from the protection the order provides. Not only does the order have access to vast resources, members are compelled by its teachings to provide fellowship, encouragement, and advice to one another.

The sorcerers and devoted clergy of the order (often favored souls) guard an ancient mystery passed down through generations of members.

THE ANCIENT SYMBOL



The symbol of the order, ancient in the times before recorded history, is sometimes inscribed on a ring's gemstone or worn as a pendant or necklace charm, most bearers of the symbol have it tattooed in secret places on their bodies. The tattoo, made by magical means, only appears after a member completes a task of importance, which usually doubles as a test to prove the individual can be trusted not to divulge the order's secrets.

The symbol is recognized by scholars and keepers of esoteric lore. Recognizing this symbol requires a DC 30 bardic knowledge or Knowledge (history) check.

THE SECRET

The celestial pulse of divine beings—not the blood of dragons—pumps through the hearts of sorcerers of the Order of the Bronze Solaris.

In the ancient days, the gods often took humanoid form—sometimes to lead armies into battle against their rivals but more often to take lovers from among the mortal races. Many of the children born of these couplings were destined for great deeds, and tales remember them as the heroes and monarchs of the era. They all possessed mighty powers, including an inborn ability for magic.

The Order of the Bronze Solaris formed to protect and foster the continuation of these divine bloodlines. The order ensures the legacies of their patron deities by arranging marriages and providing special training in the magical arts, honing the sorcerous powers of its members to a fine edge.

DIVINE ANCESTRY

Because sorcerers of the order claim ancestry from ancient deities, you might wish to select for your sorcerer a parent deity from ancient history (assuming DM approval). Consider using the Pharaonic or Olympian pantheons from *Deities and Demigods*, or the Mesopotamian mythos presented in DRAGON #329.

FEAT: BRONZE SOLARIS MEMBER

You have divine ancestry, granting you membership in the Order of the Bronze Solaris.

Prerequisite: Sorcerer level 1st.

Benefit: You are a member of the Order of the Bronze Solaris, granting you the secret knowledge of the order. Knowledge (religion) is a sorcerer class skill for you.

Choose an ancestral deity. Because of extensive instruction on the rites of your ancestral deity's church you receive a +3 bonus on Knowledge (religion) checks related to that deity (only). You are proficient with the favored weapon of your ancestral deity.

Special: You may only gain this feat at 1st level.

THE ORDER TODAY

The order maintains extensive libraries and conducts meticulous genealogical research to see if the bloodlines of heroes contain the divine spark, making them eligible for induction. The order closely guards its initiation rites. Because of the importance of bloodlines to the order, clerics linked to the order commonly perform fertility rites during festivals marking the change of seasons.

A common pass-phrase is, "Magic flows from the heart," which is met with the reply, "And the heart is divine." The order maintains safe houses throughout the world, which members claim belong to "a rich uncle" or other relative when circumstances require them to allow nonmembers inside.

paizo.com/dragon

by John E. Ling, Jr.

MULTICLASSED WIZARDS

WIZARD

Careful multiclassing of your wizard can provide you some unique benefits and flavor without sacrificing significant magical power. Watch out though, as more than three levels in other classes prevents you from gaining your all-important 9th-level spells.

Barbarian: You won't find a better hit die in the game than the d12 granted by this class. Add to that a useful skill list (and decent skill points), good base attack bonus, and good Fortitude save. An extra 10 feet of movement can save your life when you need to get away fast. Rage, however, prevents you from using your spells, so be sure to give careful consideration as to when to rage (if you ever actually do).

Bard: Bard is the only standard class from the *Player's Handbook* to have Speak Language as a class skill, allowing you to learn extra languages easily. Bard is also the only other standard class from the *Player's Handbook* to have all Knowledge skills as class skills, and it grants you more skill points per level to allow you to pick up other useful skills such as Spot and Listen. Bardic music benefits your entire party, although it interferes with the verbal and somatic components of your wizard spells.

Cleric: Picking up two domain powers can grant you useful abilities. One level of cleric allows you access to curative wands—especially useful if your party's cleric has a habit of running out of spells. Three levels in cleric grants you access to the mystic theurge prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Druid: A level of druid grants you a bonus on Knowledge (nature) checks. It also provides you with an animal companion. When coupled with your familiar this can make for an interesting tandem. Using druid levels in place of cleric levels makes for an interesting mystic theurge concept.

Fighter: The fighter class is all about bonus feats, especially its first two levels. Many fighter bonus feats are useful to a wizard: Combat Expertise, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, and Weapon Focus (ray) all add interesting abilities (or allow you to focus on particular types of spells).

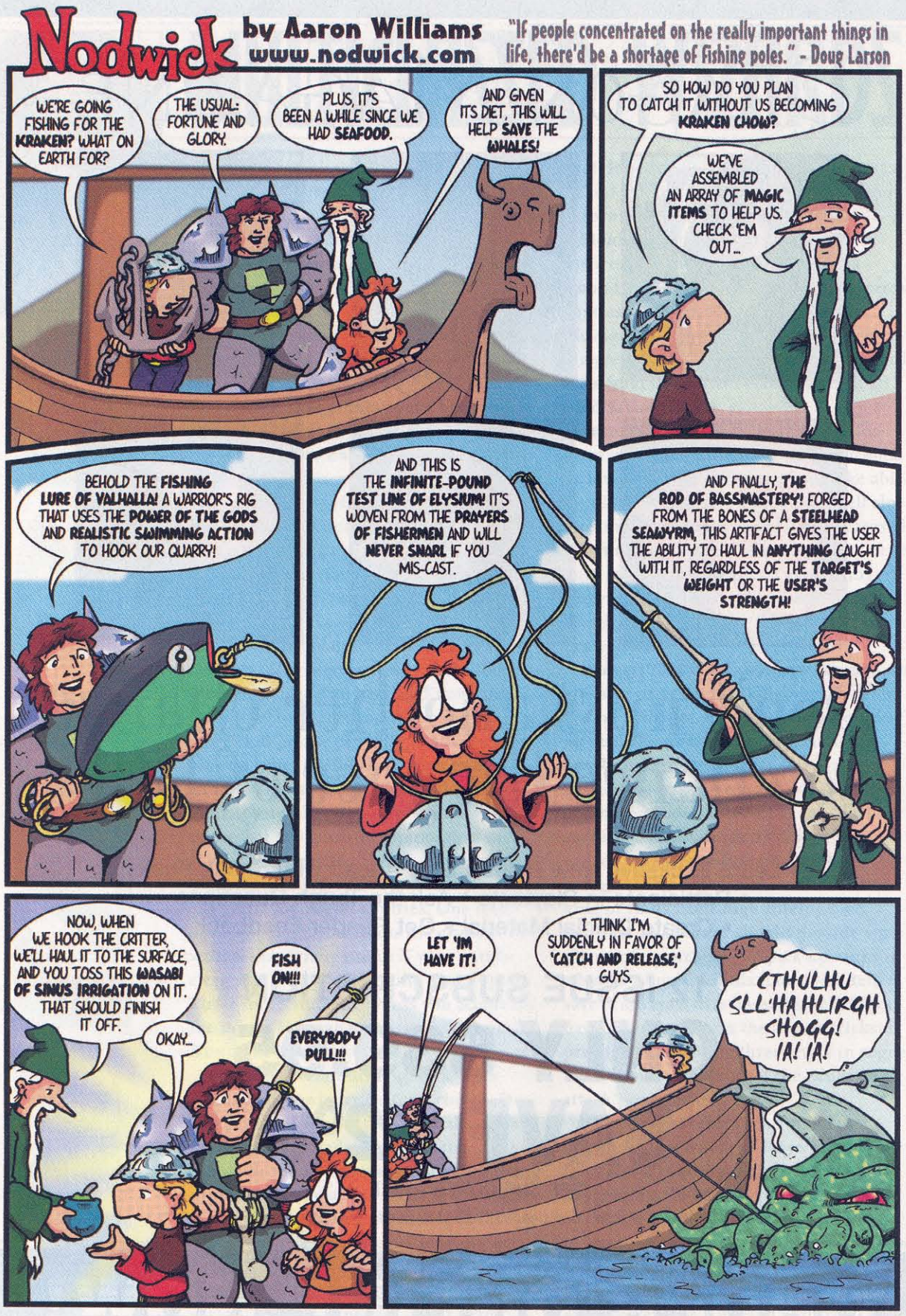
Monk: Improved unarmed strike ensures you always threaten the area around you. Additionally, as many wizards possess above-average Wisdom scores, adding your Wisdom to your Armor Class is a great boon. Monk is the only standard class from the *Player's Handbook* with all good saving throws.

Paladin: A level of paladin allows for some very interesting character concepts. Picking up *detect evil* at as a spell-like ability allows you to save a precious spell slot for something more useful. The increased Fortitude save and base attack bonus never hurt, either. Finally, a level in paladin allows you access to the eldritch knight prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Ranger: This class allows you to pick up ranks in some useful skills, such as Hide, Listen, and Spot. Favored enemy bonuses on skill checks can help, especially if your game frequently pits you against one enemy type. A second level of ranger grants you access to Point Blank Shot—a useful tool for wizards who want to fire rays or other ranged touch attacks.

Rogue: The rogue is the undeniable king of skills. Your high Intelligence modifier as a wizard should provide you plenty of opportunity to pick up ranks in a bunch of useful skills. The good Reflex save is always a nice boost, as well. If you have your eyes set on the arcane trickster prestige class, taking three levels in rogue is the easiest way to meet the 2d6 sneak attack prerequisite.

Sorcerer: Sorcerer is the only other standard class from the *Player's Handbook* that allows your familiar to continue to progress in abilities. If you're a specialist wizard, a level of sorcerer grants you access to wands and scrolls of spells from your forbidden schools. This is essentially the only mechanical reason why a wizard should ever take a level in sorcerer.


Nodwick
by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com
"If people concentrated on the really important things in life, there'd be a shortage of fishing poles." - Doug Larson
WE'RE GOING FISHING FOR THE KRAKEN? WHAT ON EARTH FOR?
THE USUAL: FORTUNE AND GLORY.
PLUS, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE HAD SEAFOOD.
AND GIVEN ITS DIET, THIS WILL HELP SAVE THE WHALES!
SO HOW DO YOU PLAN TO CATCH IT WITHOUT US BECOMING KRAKEN CHOW?
WE'VE ASSEMBLED AN ARRAY OF MAGIC ITEMS TO HELP US. CHECK 'EM OUT...
BEHOLD THE FISHING LURE OF VALHALLA! A WARRIOR'S RIG THAT USES THE POWER OF THE GODS AND REALISTIC SWIMMING ACTION TO HOOK OUR QUARRY!
AND THIS IS THE INFINITE-POUND TEST LINE OF ELYSIUM! IT'S WOVEN FROM THE PRAYERS OF FISHERMEN AND WILL NEVER SNARL IF YOU MIS-CAST.
AND FINALLY, THE ROD OF BASSMASTERY! FORGED FROM THE BONES OF A STEELHEAD SEAWYRM, THIS ARTIFACT GIVES THE USER THE ABILITY TO HAUL IN ANYTHING CAUGHT WITH IT, REGARDLESS OF THE TARGET'S WEIGHT OR THE USER'S STRENGTH!
NOW, WHEN WE HOOK THE CRITTER, WE'LL HAUL IT TO THE SURFACE, AND YOU TOSS THIS WASABI OF SINUS IRRIGATION ON IT. THAT SHOULD FINISH IT OFF.
OKAY...
FISH ON!!!
EVERYBODY PULL!!!
LET 'IM HAVE IT!
I THINK I'M SUDDENLY IN FAVOR OF 'CATCH AND RELEASE,' GUYS.
CTHULHU SLL'HA HLIRGH SHOGG! IA! IA!

DORK TOWER®
BY JOHN KOVALIC
WHATS THIS?
GAMING SNACKS FOR TONIGHT!
YOU GUYS LIKE YOUR PIZZA, AND BARBECUE POTATO CHIPS, BUT I WANTED TO BRING SOMETHING HEALTHY FOR ONCE!
SNIFF SNIFF
SO WE'VE GOT SOY MASH, TEMPEH DIP AND ONE HUNDRED PERCENT NATURAL TOFU SLAW!
GAMING'S NOT THE HEALTHIEST HOBBY IN THE WORLD ANYWAY, SO WHY NOT TAKE A CHANCE ON SOMETHING GOOD FOR US!
POKE
IT HELPS YOU LIVE LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIVES!
TRY IT! I EAT IT ALL THE TIME, AND IT HASN'T KILLED ME YET!
CHOMP CHOMP
URF
GAG
GULP
I KILL CARSON'S CHARACTER.
I KILL CARSON'S CHARACTER.
OH, LOOKEE HERE! CARSON'S CHARACTER IS HIT BY A GREAT BLUE LIGHTNING BOLT FROM THE SKY...
AND ROAMING WERE-JACKALS LIKE THEIR BARBECUE...
HEY!

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ZOGONIA
BY T.M.
A DARK ELF SLAVE-GETTER! EEEEEEEE!!
SAVE ME!
HOW MUCH MONEY YOU GOT?
HIYA... I'M JUST PASSIN' THROUGH HERE AND HAVE A QUESTION.... HAVE ANY DEVILS BEEN ROAMING AROUND, LIKE THEY'RE SEARCHING FOR SOMEBODY?
HMM... NOT THAT I RECALL.
WHY?
I GOTTA TAKE THIS CHAOS BATTERY TO A DRAGON, AND AN EVIL PRIESTESS' DEVIL-MINIONS ARE TRYING TO FIND ME AND STEAL IT.
EXCUSE ME. WHAT'S A BATTERY?
YOU KNOW... A KIND OF ANACHRONISM.
THAT THING MUST BE WORTH 10,000 GOLD!!! PERHAPS EVEN MORE THAN I OWE THE DICEHALL!
DIE, SLAVER!
SLAVER? I'm ON THE SURFACE 15 MINUTES, AND ALREADY SOME YOKEL IS PROFILING ME!
STING
WHA--?!.
EEP EEP EEP
ZZZ
★!※! I'VE BEEN GNOMED!
KILL ME!! YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS! PLEASE!
AND GET GNOME BLOOD ON MY SWORD? EWW.
SOB... SOB... MY LIFE IS HELL.
WHOA! DARK ELF!! YOU FORGOT YOUR SLAVE!!
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